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ABSTRACT

This document comprises an evaluation of the first-year implementation of the Junior High School Student Assistance Program (JHSSAP), a dropout prevention program of the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). JHSSAP is comprised of the following components: (1) Extended Counseling (EC), providing 8 hours per week of auxiliary counseling at 73 junior high schools for 20 selected at-risk students at each school; (2) Regional Assistance Center Class (RACC), providing small group and individualized academic instruction, personal guidance, and weekly counseling for 15 selected at-risk students in each region; and (3) Opportunity Room (OR), providing remedial instruction and personal guidance with a 20:1 student-to-teacher ratio at selected schools in each region. Information was gathered from a survey of program participants, counselors and teachers, principals, and coordinators. Each of the three components is evaluated on the degree to which it has improved the following student outcomes: (1) grades; (2) attendance; (3) self-esteem; and (4) self-control. Detailed descriptions of each of the three components include the following information: (1) student characteristics; (2) class and caseload sizes; (3) counseling and teaching techniques; (4) staff training and materials; and (5) various aspects of the coordinator's role. Specific recommendations for improvement are suggested. Statistical data are included on 53 tables. (FMW)

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EVALUATION OF THE
JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT
ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

PUBLICATION NO. 495

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RESEARCH & EVALUATION BRANCH

LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

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EVALUATION OF THE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL
STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Publication No. 495

by

Marilyn Lester, Ph.D.

A Report Prepared for the
Research and Evaluation Branch
Los Angeles Unified School District

September 1986

LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

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FOREWORD

As part of the dropout prevention effort, the Junior High School Student Assistance Program was developed to focus on junior high school students who exhibited the characteristics of dropout-prone students.

This evaluation covers the first year of the Junior High School Student Assistance Program's implementation. The evaluation was conducted by a junior high school teacher with research and evaluation skills who was ably assisted by the Junior High School Student Assistance Program's coordinators and guidance advisors. This was a departure from using an external evaluator or using the services of an evaluator from the Research and Evaluation Branch. However, professional consultation and help were provided to the evaluator by Research and Evaluation Branch staff whenever needed.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Board of Education created the Junior High School Student Assistance Program (JHSSAP) in August, 1985. Implemented largely between January and June, 1986, the program was designed to provide academic remediation and counseling services to junior high school students experiencing academic, discipline, and/or attendance difficulties.

Program planners intended the JHSSAP to serve a "high-risk" population, including academic underachievers, potential dropouts, students who have been suspended repeatedly or issued opportunity transfers, and students pending an expulsion proceeding or given expulsion, suspended enforcement. They hoped to fill a void in resources to help troubled students at the junior high school level.

PROGRAM COMPONENTS AND SUPPORT STAFF

The JHSSAP had three program components and three types of support staff. An overview is provided here, with more extensive descriptions later in the report.

Programs

Extended Counseling (EC). The Extended Counseling component was funded to provide eight hours a week of additional counseling time at each junior high school (N = 73). The program called for the selection of twenty students at each school who had a combination of a high number of: (1) failing marks, (2) absences and tardies, (3) teacher referrals, (4) poor

citizenship marks, and (5) opportunity transfers. Counseling program plans stipulated after-school and weekend hours to facilitate the involvement of students and their families in counseling.

Regional Assistance Center Class (RACC). A Regional Assistance Center Class was established at one school in each region except Region C, where two classes were formed (N = 9). Student selection was determined by academic, attendance, and/or discipline problems which prevented success in regular school programs.³ Each class was designed to assist 15 students in each region at a selected school through small group and individualized academic instruction, personal guidance and weekly counseling. After the students resolved their difficulties in a RACC, each student was evaluated to determine his potential for a successful return to the home school.

Opportunity Room (OR). Funds were allocated to each region to develop Opportunity Rooms at selected schools. Each OR was to maintain a 20:1 student-to-teacher ratio while providing a remedial instructional program and personal guidance.

Staff

Regional and District Coordinators. Region administrators appointed eight region coordinators to oversee implementation of the JHSSAP and to provide direct services to program participants. Specific coordinator tasks included: coordinating student selection and placement for program components; finding alternative placements when JHSSAP could not accept a student; counseling students and parents about academic, attendance and personal problems; serving as liaison with schools and community agencies; introducing JHSSAP to school personnel; providing management support services

to program components, e.g., training and materials; and managing record keeping, e.g., developing intake forms, writing reports, and monitoring students' entry into and exit from the program. A district coordinator was responsible for district-wide leadership, supervision, support services, staff development, record keeping, and liaison with district, region, and school staff.

Student Attendance and Adjustment Services Counselors (SAAS). Two SAAS counselors were responsible to provide counseling, attendance motivation, and agency liaison services to students and parents. The SAAS counselors were to participate on a panel to interview and screen students for JHSSAP and other special placements. They were to provide in-service programs to grade counselors relative to community referrals. Additionally, they were to provide consultation to region, school and RACC personnel about student problems. The SASS counselors were to conduct group counseling in each RACC classroom.

RESEARCH GOALS

The desired outcomes for student participation in each component of the JHSSAP were improved grades, attendance, self esteem, and self control. One major goal of the study was to ascertain the degree to which these outcomes were achieved in order to provide a basis for improved program implementation. Describing fully each of the three program components was the second goal. This description would include student characteristics, class and caseload sizes, counseling and teaching techniques, staff training and materials, and various aspects of the coordinators' role.

ORGANIZATION OF THE REPORT

Following this introduction, Section II describes sampling and data gathering techniques for the JHSSAP evaluation study. Each of the next three sections describes one of the program components and assesses student outcomes. In order, these are: the Regional Assistance Center Class (Section III), Extended Counseling (Section IV), and the Opportunity Room (Section V). Section VI contains Recommendations.

CHAPTER II

METHODOLOGY

This section of the report describes the sampling procedures and data collection instruments used to study the Junior High School Student Assistance Program.

SAMPLING

Student Samples

Extended Counseling (EC) and Opportunity Room (OR). Student samples for the EC and OR components were generated in two stages: (1) Two schools per region were chosen; those which best approximated the racial and ethnic composition of the region. LAUSD's Racial and Ethnic Survey (1985) served as the data base for this sampling. (2) For each individual school, region coordinators selected odd-numbered students from the EC roster until eight were identified. When necessary, even-numbered students were added until eight were chosen. This procedure was repeated for OR participants.

Regional Assistance Center Class (RACC). Region coordinators selected ten students from each RACC. They identified odd-numbered students on RACC rollsheets and added even-numbered ones until the sample size was attained.

Adult Samples

Counselors and Teachers. The participation of all RACC teachers was requested for the evaluation and up to two EC counselors and two OR teachers from each junior high school.

Region Coordinators, SAAS Counselors, and Principals. All program coordinators, the two SAAS counselors, and junior high school principals were asked to participate in the study.

INSTRUMENT DESIGN

Student Instruments

One student questionnaire was used for each program component. The Extended Counseling (EC) instrument is described in detail since it was the model for the other two instruments.

The EC student instrument was divided into three modules, each having a different respondent. The first module was completed by the coordinator. It contained background variables such as region, school, birthdate, sex, and ethnicity. To gauge possible program effects, coordinators used report cards and cumulative records to report the number of failing grades, unsatisfactory marks in work habits and cooperation, grade point average, absences and tardies for three semesters; spring 1985, fall 1985, and spring 1986. Finally, coordinators assessed how such factors as school attendance, school performance, discipline and personal problems weighed in selecting a student for counseling.

The students' counselor completed the second module of the instrument. The counselors rated the frequency with which each student exhibited various behaviors which caused problems at school (e.g., lack of concentration, hyperactivity or restlessness). Counselors were asked to assess the impact of counseling upon each student. They were asked to determine if students had improved in their attitudes toward school, self esteem, ability to concentrate, self control, and ability to follow directions. It was perceived that these factors may affect academic progress in

regular classrooms. Counselors also reported if students were tested for special education and if referrals were made for other district or community resources.

The third module was completed by each student. The student responded to statements about self concept, attitudes toward school, and reactions to the counseling received.

For the Regional Assistance Center Class (RACC) component, the regional coordinator, counselor, RACC teacher and student each completed a separate module of the instrument. For the Opportunity Room (OR) program, the regional coordinator, OR teacher, and student each completed a module. Specific variables in these instruments are adaptations of the EC variables previously described.

Staff Instruments

Counselor and Teacher Questionnaires. The counselor and teacher questionnaires contained similar types of items. One section of each questionnaire requested identifying data: name, school, region, and position. A second set of questions solicited a description of the program component at the school level. Variables included class or caseload size, location of component, respondent time devoted to the program, and techniques and strategies employed for assisting students. A third section of each questionnaire solicited perceptions, assessments and recommendations concerning student selection; adequacy of allotted space and time; and training, materials and supervision provided by the school and regional coordinators. Two open-ended questions solicited perceptions of the best aspects of the program component and areas where improvements were needed.

Principals' Questionnaire. The questionnaire administered to principals was designed: (1) to gather their assessments of the regional coordinators' communication with them about each program component, (2) to describe program supervision at the school level, and (3) to solicit recommendations for improvement.

Coordinator Interview and Questionnaire. Regional and district coordinators participated in a two-session group interview to evaluate the Junior High School Student Assistance Program. The two SAAS counselors participated in the first session. Each session lasted two hours. For each program component, coordinators and counselors addressed interview guide questions covering goals, staffing, student selection, staff training and supervision, achievements, problems and recommendations. Detailed field notes were taken and later sorted by topic. A few topics were difficult to address in a group setting. A coordinator questionnaire probed those areas including: a job description; procedures used to select RACC students; and a summary of achievements, problems and recommendations. A short checklist asked whether coordinators introduced the JHSSAP to various school officials.

CHAPTER III

THE REGIONAL ASSISTANCE CENTER CLASS

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Chapter III of this report examines the Regional Assistance Center Class (RACC). This component of the Junior High School Student Assistance Program involved region-level classes established to help students whose academic, discipline, and/or attendance problems prevented success in regular school programs. The students attended the RACC program instead of their home schools. Each RACC had a full-time teacher and part-time aide. Academic remediation, enhancement of self esteem and self control, and eventual return to regular school were RACC's major goals.

In the first half of Chapter III, a brief demographic portrait of the RACC sample is described and followed by assessment of student outcomes: The second half used information from the principals', coordinators', and RACC teachers' questionnaires and the coordinator interview to describe and assess various aspects of the RACC program.

Student Selection

Each region installed a similar three-phase student selection process for RACC. First, a school referred a student to the Region Coordinator or Committee, submitting cumulative, attendance, anecdotal, and often health records, along with region-created referral forms. Prior to this, some region coordinators held orientation meetings with school staff to acquaint them with RACC and to explain the selection process. Two regions solicited the names of one to three students from each school for possible entry into the program.

In the intake phase, referral information was assembled by the coordinator. The student and, in some regions, the parent were interviewed. In the decision-making phase, the coordinator and, in some regions, a resource panel, a region administrator, and/or SAAS counselor decided the student's suitability for RACC.

Student Characteristics

Table III-1 displays the region, age, grade, and sex distributions of the RACC student sample. Region C had two RACC classes, and so its expected sample size was 20 students while the other regions should have 10 students. (A few students were excluded because significant portions of their data-gathering instruments were incomplete.) The sample's median age was 14. One-third of the sample students were in 7th grade (including seventeen 14-year olds). It is unknown if the older students were retained in grade at some point; a variable to be investigated next year. RACC students had many more males than females (an 80%-20% split); however, age, grade, and sex did not vary by region.

Table III-2 presents additional background characteristics which varied significantly by region. While Black students constitute about 20% of the LAUSD student population, they comprised 36% of the sample. Hispanic students are about 50% of the LAUSD student body and were 41.9% of the sample. The proportion of White students in the sample was the same as in the District, which was 22.1%. The greatest length (61%) of student enrollment was for 1-2 months, 10% for less than one month, and 30% for 3-4 months. Part of this variation was due to the establishment of RACC classes at various points in the semester. Before entering RACC, close to half the sample had at least one Opportunity Transfer. Spanish was

the home language for about one-third of the students in the sample.

STUDENT OUTCOMES

Report Card Data

On each student questionnaire, coordinators recorded the number of "Fails," "Unsatisfactory" marks, absences, and the grade point average for three semesters - spring 1985, fall 1985, and spring 1986. Collecting data for three semesters permitted two "pre-post" comparisons. Spring 1985 with spring 1986 comparisons were made because the two semesters had approximately the same calendar structure. (Absences can only be validly compared for these semesters). Fall 1985 records were used for referral and placement decisions. Hence, fall 1985 to spring 1986 comparisons were included as well.

Number of Failing Grades. The number of failing grades is the topic of Table III-3. RACC students received an average of nearly 2.5 failing marks on their spring 1985 report card. On their spring 1986 report card, the average number of fails dropped to less than one (0.53). RACC students had almost two fewer fails on the spring 1986 than on the spring 1985 report card. The difference was statistically significant, i.e., it probably represented a "real" rather than a "chance" decrease in the number of failing marks. The difference for fall 1985 with spring 1986 was even greater. There were almost three fewer F's on the spring 1986 than on the fall 1985 report card.

Comparing spring 1985 with spring 1986, the greatest gains were made by RACC students in Region H. They averaged 4 Fails in spring 1985 and none in spring 1986. In Regions E and G, there was no statistically

significant change. However, students in those two regions also had fewer F's before entering RACC, and so there was less improvement possible. In contrasting fall 1985 with spring 1986, Region A, B, F, and H students showed the greatest reduction in the F's received. In Region G, RACC students did not significantly change the number of F's received. The mean number of F's increased between spring and fall, 1985, and then decreased after participation in RACC.

A reasonable hypothesis is that the length of program participation affects failing grades. However, Table III-4 shows no relationship between these two variables. A student enrolled in RACC for two weeks received no more F's than a student enrolled for three months. It appears that RACC teachers simply issued fewer F's to program participants.

Grade Point Average (GPA). Students had a mean (average) (GPA) just above a D (1.0) in spring 1985 and nearly a C in spring 1986. The fall 1985 GPAs were lower than spring 1985. Therefore, the fall-to-spring improvement was greater. Students jumped from an F average in the fall to a point midway between a D and C average in the spring of 1986. By region, RACC students in Region A made the greatest gain between fall 1985 and spring 1986 from a 0.31 to a 2.87 GPA. On the other hand, the Region B group did not reach a D average in the spring of 1986. In fact, in 6 of the 8 regions, the spring 1986 GPA remained below a C. The average grade of students enrolled in RACC classrooms was a D.

According to the data, length of participation in the program did not affect grade point averages. Students enrolled for 3-4 months made no greater improvement than those present for shorter periods of time.

Unsatisfactory Marks. In the two semesters prior to entering the RACC program, students averaged 4-5 Unsatisfactory marks in Work Habits. (See Table III-6.) They averaged just over one U in spring 1986, a very significant change.

Unsatisfactory Cooperation marks for three semesters are compared in Table III-7. In the spring and fall before entering RACC, students averaged more than three Unsatisfactory marks in cooperation. On the average, this dropped to just over one U on the spring 1986 report card, a significant improvement.

Absences. The mean number of absences for three semesters is shown in Table III-8. Students averaged 17+ absences in spring 1985 and 13 in spring 1986, a drop of almost 5 absences. (Only the two spring semesters may be validly compared, because they had approximately the same number of actual school days.) In regions A, E, and F, students averaged more absences in spring 1986 than a year earlier. The differences were not statistically significant. The greatest reduction in absences occurred in Region C where students had almost 14 fewer absences in Spring 1986 compared to spring 1985.

There was significant variation in absences by time spent in the RACC program (See Table III-9). The greatest reduction occurred for students enrolled the longest, from 15.35 absences in spring 1985 to 8.96 in spring 1986.

Relationships Among Report Card Items. Previously, individual report card items (e.g., F's and U's) were treated separately. In Table III-10, a correlation matrix depicts relationships among report card variables and

a composite Report Card Index. (It should be noted that very strong relationships will be close to 1.00.)

In the RACC classes, classroom conduct and academic performance were closely related. Also, strong relationships existed between the number of F's and U's for spring 1986. That is, the more F's received, the more U's they also received. Conversely, students who received few U's also tended to receive few F grades.

The Composite Report Card Index combined four separate items: F's, U's in Work Habits, U's in Cooperation, and absences. Each item was given 1-5 points, with 5 the best score (e.g., fewest F's or absences). A student could accumulate 4-20 points. The table shows that Index scores were significantly related to all other report card variables. Most importantly, the Composite Report Card Index was the only variable which correlated with absences. The higher aggregated report card scores were associated with relatively few absences. Absences were not related to the number of F's or U's or the GPA.

Background Variables and Report Card Data. Relationships between several background variables and report card data were tested and found not to be significant. In addition, age, sex, race and ethnicity produced no correlations over .30.

Caution and Discussion. Caution must be exercised in interpreting report card findings. Most important was the fact that different adults issued report card marks in each semester, e.g., the teachers who gave an average of three Fails to the RACC sample in the spring of 1985 were different individuals than the RACC teachers who issued few F's in the

spring of 1986. RACC environment and teachers' grading criteria may be the significant factors in improved report card grades rather than students' improved performance per se. This interpretation received some support from the fact that length of time in the program had no effects on the number of F's, U's, or GPAs, for students in the program 3+ months than those enrolled for less than one month.

Caution must also be exercised in the interpretation of regional variation in report card data: no uniform standards were imposed on the teachers who served as RACC teachers in each region.

Language and Self Esteem Test Scores

Pre- and post-participation measures were used to determine if the RACC had any effects on students' language skills and knowledge. Table III-11 displays a data matrix showing pre- and posttest scores for language skills.

Five of the eight regions administered pretests and posttests of students' language skills (A, B, E, F, and H). Region B administered a pretest. Region A, E, F, and H used different tests so the findings could not be grouped. Moreover, the usable samples in each region were very small (5-9 cases). With these problems, findings should be interpreted very cautiously.

For Region A, there was no difference between pre- and post-reading scores for their nine students. In Region E, there was an average gain of 1.8 grade levels in reading. The students averaged sixth grade, second month on the pretest and eighth grade on the posttest. Region H students gained almost one year in less than four months of RACC participation.

Only Region A administered a pre- and post-coordinator constructed inventory on self esteem.

Teachers' Perceptions of Student Improvement

Teachers' direct ratings of student improvement were used as a measure of RACC effects. The RACC teacher assessed student improvement in 14 areas: These are grouped into the following: general self esteem, academic self concept, cooperation, personal responsibility, attitude toward school, concentration, amount of work completed, reading and reasoning skills. When each item was analyzed separately, there were no statistically significant findings. However, the correlations between items were high enough to permit construction of an Improvement Index - a sum of the 14 item scores for each student. Improvement Index scores ranged from 14 to 42 points. Index scores were then correlated with report card data. Table III-12 displays the resulting correlation matrix. The Improvement Index and Unsatisfactory marks in Work Habits produced the strongest relationship. The higher the Improvement Index score, the fewer U's received. Weaker relationships resulted when the number of F's and U's in Cooperation were part of the correlations. GPA was positively related to the Improvement Index. The higher the GPA, the higher the Improvement Index score. In general, the two types of outcome, report card and the student Improvement Index, were related to one another. Background variables including grade, sex, and ethnicity were not statistically significant relative to the Improvement Index or to its component items.

PROGRAM OUTCOMES

Student Selection

Each region installed a similar three-phase student selection process for RACC. First, a school referred a student to the coordinator or committee, submitting cumulative, attendance, anecdotal, and often health

records, along with region-created referral forms. Prior to this, some region coordinators held orientation meetings with school staff to acquaint them with RACC and to explain the selection process. Two regions solicited the names of one to three students from each school for possible entry into the program.

In the intake phase, referral information was assembled by the coordinator. The student and, in some regions, the parent were interviewed. In the decision-making phase, the coordinator, and in some regions, a region administrator, a resource panel and/or a SAAS counselor decided the student's suitability for RACC. The relative decision-making authority of the coordinator and resource panel varied across regions, as did the panel's composition. Coordinators stated that they made alternative referrals or placements when students were not accepted into RACC.

Each region composed its own resource panel, referral and intake forms, and criteria selection. Some regions selected students with problems which could be corrected in a five or six week stay in RACC. Other regions anticipated longer-term placements and selected students with more serious problems. Some added the proviso that there be strong parental support for the placement. While the original proposal described RACC serving students with serious attendance, academic, and discipline problems, there was fairly wide regional variation in the selection criteria, referral and intake forms, and procedures.

Information Received by Principals. Principals assessed coordinator communication concerning the RACC program's goals, selection criteria, and referral procedures. (See Table III-13.) Seventy percent of the principals said coordinator communication about RACC's goals was very

adequate, 22% said it was somewhat inadequate, and 8% said it was very inadequate. All respondents in Regions A and B said information was very adequate.

A majority of the principals gave a top rating to coordinators' communication about student selection criteria. Fewer than 10% said communication was very inadequate. However, there were differences by region; almost all principals in Regions A and B said coordinator communication concerning selection criteria was very adequate; less than one quarter of Region F and G principals gave this high rating.

Not all students referred to RACC were accepted. Class size was one consideration: a maximum of 15 students could be enrolled at any one time. Also, RACC placement could be deemed inappropriate in specific cases. School personnel often spent considerable time preparing referrals and anticipated specific feedback when a student was rejected for RACC. A problem in this area was that almost one-fourth (24.4%) of the principals believed coordinator communication was very inadequate about the rejection of referred students. Approximately 31.7% stated communication was somewhat inadequate. About one-third of the responding principals felt communication should improve regarding required paperwork for referring a student to RACC.

Funding and the School Year. Funding for RACC was based on the traditional academic year. There was no funding during the summer. Coordinators and principals serving year-round schools believed that the RACC component should be available twelve months a year.

The RACC Teachers. Each region selected its RACC teachers. During the interview, some coordinators said they faced a serious problem recruiting competent, experienced teachers for RACC after the school year

had commenced. As a result, two RACC teachers were not fully credentialed. No special education teachers were recruited. One coordinator said her region found an interested and qualified teacher, but the principal did not release that person from her position in the school for the RACC position.

Seven of the nine teachers completed questionnaires. (See Table III-14.) Four of the seven said staff development workshops were held. Of the four, three assessed the training as very useful and one as somewhat useful. Three teachers said no staff inservices were held.

The RACC teachers expressed need for training. In an open-ended question soliciting inservice topics, they suggested the following: handling disruptive students, improving student self-image, individualizing instruction, dealing with physically and emotionally abused children, peer relationships and conflicts, and the "75 point contract," the individualized instructional model used in options schools.

All RACC teachers received printed classroom materials. About half found the materials very useful and the other half responded somewhat useful. In the open-ended questions, RACC teachers expressed needs for the following supplies: self-esteem and values-oriented material, basic teaching supplies, audio-visual material, the "75 point contract," and accompanying textbooks.

RACC teachers indicated that five of the seven classes contained 11-15 students. Two classes had 6-10 students at the time data were collected.

Five of the seven teachers requested improvements in their classrooms. (See Table III-15.) Two-thirds viewed their rooms as less than adequate. In an open-ended question, nearly all stated that they wanted their classrooms divided into separate learning centers, e.g., small groups of tables rather than rows of chairs.

Program design documents specified that RACC should be separated from regular classrooms. Both coordinators and RACC teachers were queried about this spatial arrangement.

Coordinators approved of, and wanted to maintain, the geographical separation of RACC for two basic reasons: 1) RACC school day is shorter than that of other students; 2) Some coordinators felt that potential peer conflicts might be averted if RACC students (who came from many schools) interacted very little with the local school population. Among the teachers, only about half believed their rooms were, in fact, isolated in the school. Four of the seven teachers believed RACC should be separated from the rest of the school population.

A few RACC students were "mainstreamed" into one or more regular classes last year. For example, one coordinator placed a RACC student into a regular math class based on the student's high diagnostic test score.

Teachers spent most of their time on individualized instruction with the students in the RACC. However, two of the seven teachers said less than half the school day was allocated to individual work.

The ways in which RACC teachers allotted time for various subjects are presented in Table III-16. Five of the seven teachers used 1-2 periods per day for language skills and an equal amount of time for math while two teachers spent less than one period on these subjects. Natural and social sciences, fine arts, and P.E. received less attention. More than half the teachers used 1-2 periods per day to work with students on self esteem, self discipline, and values-oriented lessons.

During interviews, coordinators reported that RACC teachers had a difficult time helping students raise their self esteem enough to focus on academic matters. In addition, integrating a new student into a class

during academic lessons posed a problem for most teachers.

RACC teachers rated the frequency with which they used various techniques to help students change problem behaviors. The results appear in Table III-17. The items are listed in order from those used most often to those used least often. All seven teachers focused on helping students identify appropriate and inappropriate behavior. Six of the seven teacher modeled appropriate behavior, monitored students' attendance, and listened to students. Techniques which were used the least were role playing and the use of contracts. In open-ended questions, teachers mentioned additional techniques to help students: group discussion about responsibility, values and self esteem; praise and reward systems; art work; contact with parents; and assistance from Student Attendance and Adjustment Counselors.

The coordinator's role included observations of RACC classes and consultations with the teachers. Table III-18 describes the RACC teachers' perceptions of the coordinator in four areas. All 7 teachers discussed the program with the coordinator at least 3 times; 5 of the 7 said more than four discussions occurred. A majority of the teachers (4 of 7) found the discussions very helpful. Contacts between coordinators and teachers were apparently not a problem.

Acquisition of various classroom materials was quite important to the teachers. Four of the 7 perceived the coordinator as very supportive in helping to procure materials. Three teachers thought there was room for improvement (selecting the somewhat supportive category). Five coordinators were seen as very supportive and the other two as somewhat supportive in recognizing teachers' efforts.

Teachers' Overall Assessment of RACC.

Five of the seven RACC teachers would like to continue in the same role. Responding to two open-ended questions, the teachers listed the best parts of the RACC component and the areas where improvements are needed. Generally, they liked interacting with a small number of students, seeing positive changes in the students' behavior and attendance, and having assistance from aides and counselors. Most of the problem areas were previously addressed. One teacher mentioned the desirability of having a conference among the teacher, coordinator, and student before the student enters the class.

SUMMARY

A Regional Assistance Center Class (RACC) was established in each region except Region C where two classes were formed. Through individualized instruction, counseling, and a small class milieu, students had an opportunity to work to resolve academic, discipline, and/or attendance deficiencies which prevented their progress in regular school.

Prior to entering the RACC, students' average number of failing grades was increasing. The latest report card revealed a reverse in that trend: there was a significant reduction in the mean number of F's. Related to the decreased number of F's, grade point averages rose, though not to a more satisfactory "C" average. Also, the mean number of Unsatisfactory Work Habits and Cooperation marks dropped significantly. On the whole, participants' report cards greatly improved after the RACC. Whatever the reasons, RACC teachers issued few failing and unsatisfactory grades. This teacher behavior may account for much of the pre-post differences.

Attendance for the total sample increased and absences decreased. However, in some regions, absences actually rose during spring 1986. It is unknown if large numbers of absences occurred during the semester time period before placement in the class. The greatest reduction in absences occurred for students enrolled in the RACC class for the longest periods of time.

The quantity and quality of information given to coordinators by principals varied greatly by region. Criteria for selecting students to enter the RACC also varied by region, particularly the seriousness of student difficulties. There were no district-wide selection procedures or referral and intake forms.

Coordinators and principals serving year-round schools believed the Regional Assistance Center Class program should operate year-round. Recruiting teachers for the program proved difficult in several regions. Some classes were staffed by inexperienced teachers without standard credentials. Teacher respondents suggested several topics for future staff development and listed desired types of teaching materials. The majority of the regional class teachers wanted to retain their positions.

Table III-1
Background Characteristics of Students in the
Regional Assistance Center Class

Item	N	%
Region		
A	10	11.6
B	8	9.3
C	20	23.3
D	10	11.6
E	9	10.5
F	10	11.6
G	10	11.6
H	9	10.5
Total	86	
Age		
12	1	1.2
13	14	16.9
14	37	44.6
15	23	27.7
16	16	9.6
Total	83	
Grade		
6	2	2.3
7	29	33.7
8	36	41.9
9	16	22.1
Total	86	
Sex		
Male	68	80.0
Female	17	20.0
Total	85	

Table III-2
Background Characteristics of Students in the
Regional Assistance Center Class by Region

Item		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	Total
Ethnicity***										
Native American	N	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
	%	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.3
Black	N	0	6	19	5	1	0	0	0	31
	%	0.0	75.0	95.0	50.0	11.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	36.0
Hispanic	N	5	2	1	2	1	7	10	8	36
	%	50.0	25.0	5.0	20.0	11.1	70.0	100	88.9	41.9
White	N	5	0	0	1	6	3	0	1	16
	%	50.0	0.0	0.0	10.0	66.7	30.0	0.0	11.1	18.6
Filipino	N	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
	%	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	11.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.2
Total		10	8	20	10	9	10	10	9	86
Length of Enrollment*** in Regional Assistance Center Class										
Less than 1 month	N	1	2	0	1	2	2	0	1	9
	%	10.0	25.0	0.0	10.0	22.2	20.0	0.0	11.1	10.5
1-2 months	N	9	0	15	4	7	8	1	8	52
	%	90.0	0.0	75.0	40.0	77.8	80.0	10.0	88.9	60.5
3-4 months	N	0	6	5	5	0	0	9	0	25
	%	0.0	75.0	25.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	90.0	0.0	29.1
Total		10	8	20	10	9	10	10	9	86
Student Ever Issued "Opportunity Transfer"***										
Yes	N	3	4	14	3	4	1	0	7	36
	%	33.3	50.0	70.0	30.0	44.4	11.1	0.0	77.8	42.9
No	N	6	4	6	7	5	8	10	2	48
	%	66.7	50.0	30.0	70.0	55.6	88.9	100	2.2	57.1
Total		9	8	20	10	9	9	10	9	84
Home Language***										
English	N	8	6	19	8	9	5	0	3	58
	%	80.0	75.0	95.0	80.0	100	55.6	0.0	33.3	68.2
Spanish	N	2	2	1	2	0	4	10	6	27
	%	20.0	25.0	5.0	20.0	0.0	44.4	100	66.7	31.8
Total		10	8	20	10	9	9	10	9	85

**p .01
***p .001

Table III-3
Regional Assistance Center Class Students'
Mean Number of Failing Grades

Group	Semester Means			Difference of Means	N
	Spring '85	Fall '85	Spring '86		
Total Sample	2.49	- -	0.53	1.96***	78
	- -	3.36	0.54	2.02***	80
Region A	2.80	- -	0.40	2.40**	10
	- -	4.60	0.40	4.20***	10
Region B	3.17	- -	1.17	2.00	6
	- -	4.33	1.16	3.16**	6
Region C	2.20	- -	0.50	1.70**	20
	- -	2.50	0.50	2.00**	20
Region D	3.12	- -	0.25	2.87*	8
	- -	3.00	0.25	2.75**	8
Region E	1.00	- -	0.57	0.43	7
	- -	3.62	0.50	3.13**	8
Region F	2.56	- -	0.56	2.00	9
	- -	3.80	0.70	3.10***	10
Region G	1.33	- -	1.00	0.33	9
	- -	2.33	1.00	1.33	9
Region H	4.00	- -	0.00	4.00***	9
	- -	3.89	0.00	3.89***	9

*p .05
**p .01
***p .001

Table III-4
Regional Assistance Center Class Students'
Mean Number of Failing Grades by
Length of Time Enrolled

Time in Program	Semester Means			Difference of Means	N
	Spring '85	Fall '85	Spring '86		
Less Than 1 Month	2.50	- -	0.00	2.50*	4
	- -	3.20	0.00	2.80*	5
1-2 Months	2.53	- -	0.49	2.04***	49
	- -	3.50	0.48	3.02***	50
3-4 Months	2.40	- -	0.68	1.72***	25
	- -	3.12	0.68	2.44***	25

*p .05
**p .01
***p .001

Table III-5
Mean Grade Point Average of Students in the
Regional Assistance Center Class

Group	Semester Means			Difference of Means	N
	Spring '85	Fall '85	Spring '86		
Total Sample	1.13	- -	1.85	.73***	78
	- -	0.69	1.85	1.17***	78
Region A	1.00	- -	2.87	1.87***	10
	- -	0.31	2.87	2.56***	10
Region B	0.82	- -	0.80	-0.02	5
	- -	0.24	0.80	0.56*	5
Region C	1.19	- -	1.92	0.73**	20
	- -	0.85	1.92	1.06***	20
Region D	0.99	- -	1.91	0.93*	8
	- -	0.75	1.91	1.16***	8
Region E	1.36	- -	1.94	0.58	8
	- -	0.58	1.94	1.36**	8
Region F	1.04	- -	1.20	0.16	9
	- -	0.50	1.20	0.70*	9
Region G	1.68	- -	1.48	-0.20	9
	- -	0.96	1.48	0.52*	9
Region H	0.73	- -	2.10	1.37**	9
	- -	0.97	2.10	1.13**	9

*p .05
**p .01
***p .001

Table III-6
Regional Assistance Center Class Students'
Mean Number of Unsatisfactory Work Habits

Group	Semester Means			Difference of Means	N
	Spring '85	Fall '85	Spring '86		
Total Sample	4.14 - -	- - 4.95	1.13 1.13	3.01*** 3.75***	77 80
Region A	4.50 - -	- - 5.60	0.40 0.40	4.10*** 5.20***	10 10
Region B	3.75 - -	- - 5.16	2.00 1.67	1.75 3.50*	4 6
Region C	4.10 - -	- - 4.70	1.05 1.05	3.05*** 3.65***	20 20
Region D	4.14 - -	- - 5.57	1.57 2.00	2.57 3.57**	7 7
Region E	4.00 - -	- - 5.11	0.67 0.67	3.33** 4.44**	9 9
Region F	4.22 - -	- - 4.90	2.33 2.50	1.88 2.40**	9 10
Region G	3.11 - -	- - 4.00	1.44 1.44	1.67 2.56**	9 9
Region H	5.11 - -	- - 5.00	0.33 0.33	4.78*** 4.67***	9 9

*p .05
**p .01
***p .001

Table III-7
Regional Assistance Center Class Students'
Mean Number of Unsatisfactory Cooperation Marks

Group	Semester Means			Difference of Means	N
	Spring '85	Fall '85	Spring '86		
Total Sample	3.35 - -	- - 3.68	1.14 1.16	2.21*** 2.53***	78 80
Region A	3.20 - -	- - 4.20	0.70 0.70	2.50* 3.50***	10 10
Region B	4.40 - -	- - 5.16	2.20 2.50	2.20 2.67**	5 6
Region C	3.70 - -	- - 3.50	1.30 1.30	2.40*** 2.20***	20 20
Region D	2.86 - -	- - 4.57	0.86 0.86	2.00 3.71***	7 7
Region E	2.78 - -	- - 3.11	0.44 0.44	2.34* 2.67**	9 9
Region F	2.67 - -	- - 3.50	2.22 2.00	0.44 1.50*	9 10
Region G	2.11 - -	- - 2.22	1.44 1.44	0.67 0.78	9 9
Region H	5.00 - -	- - 4.11	0.22 0.22	4.78*** 3.89***	9 9

*p .05
**p .01
***p .001

Table III-8
Mean Number of Absences of Students
in the Regional Assistance Center Class

Group	Semester Means			Difference of Means	N
	Spring '85	Fall '85	Spring '86		
Total Sample	17.74 - -	- - 21.27	13.00 12.97	4.74**	74 79
Region A	23.80 - -	- - 26.60	29.60 29.60	-5.80	10 10
Region B	12.60 - -	- - 19.57	5.00 4.14	7.60	5 7
Region C	23.60 - -	- - 27.90	9.70 9.70	13.90***	20 20
Region D	11.38 - -	- - 14.50	4.88 4.87	6.50	8 8
Region E	13.63 - -	- - 23.75	19.25 16.25	-5.63	8 8
Region F	23.60 - -	- - 19.13	25.20 26.13	-1.60	5 8
Region G	9.89 - -	- - 12.56	7.11 7.11	2.78*	9 9
Region H	14.78 - -	- - 16.44	7.11 7.11	7.67	9 9

*p .05
**p .01
***p .001

Table III-9
Students' Mean Number of Absences by Length of Time Enrolled
in Regional Assistance Center Class

Group	Semester Means			Difference of Means	N
	Spring '85	Fall '85	Spring '86		
Less Than 1 Month	14.50	- -	16.67	-2.17	6
	- -	20.29	16.14		7
1-2 Months	19.40	- -	14.58	4.82*	45
	- -	23.13	14.94		47
3-4 Months	15.35	- -	8.96	6.39*	23
	- -	18.08	8.40		25

*p .05

Table III-10

**Correlation Matrix of Report Card Marks and Report Card Index
for Students in the Regional Assistance Center Class**

Report Card Marks and Index	"F" Grades	"U's" in Work Habits	"U's" in Cooperation	Grade Point Average	Absences
U's in Work Habits	.67**				
U's in Cooperation	.45***	.61***			
Grade Point Average	-.70***	-.72***	-.47**		
Absences	.07	.15	.11	.03	
Report Card Index	.71***	.79***	.72***	.65***	.51***

Note. The index is composed of four report card variables: the number of F's, U's in Work Habits, U's in Cooperation, and absences on the Spring 1986 report card. Each item is worth 1-5 points for a highest possible total of 20 points.

*p .05
**p .01
***p .011

Table III-11

Pretests and Posttests of Language Skills by Region

Region	Reading Pretest Administered/ Name of Test	Reading Posttest Administered/ Name of Test	Pretest Mean	Posttest Mean	Mean Differ- ences	N of Valid Cases
A	Dreier Oral	Dreier Oral				
		Independent Level	5.56	5.56		9
		Instructional Level	6.22	6.22		9
B	Name of test not specified	No	--	--	--	
C	No	No	--	--	--	
D	No	No	--	--	--	
E	Nelson Reading	Nelson Reading	6.24	8.06	1.82	7
F	Piat	Slosson	--	--	--	
G	No	No	--	--	--	
H	Gates Reading Assessment	Gates Reading Assessment	2.34	3.28	0.94	5

Table III-12

Improvement Index Correlated With
Spring 1986 Report Card Marks

Item	"F" Grades	U's in Work Habits	U's in Cooperation	Grade Point Average	N
Improvement Index	-.29*	-.54***	-.34***	.48***	64

**p .01
***p .001

Table III-13

Principals' Assessments of Information Received About
the Regional Assistance Center Class by Region

Item		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	Total
Adequacy of Information Received About:										
Goals of the Regional Class										
Very Adequate	N	8	4	2	8	7	2	1	3	35
	%	100	100	66.7	88.9	77.8	28.6	20.0	60.0	70.0
Somewhat Inadequate	N	0	0	1	1	1	4	2	2	11
	%	0.0	0.0	33.3	11.1	11.1	57.1	40.0	40.0	22.0
Very Inadequate	N	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	0	4
	%	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	11.1	14.3	40.0	0.0	41.9
Total		8	4	3	9	9	7	5	5	50
Student Selection Criteria										
Very Adequate	N	7	3	2	6	7	2	1	3	31
	%	87.5	100	66.7	66.7	70.0	25.0	20.0	60.0	60.8
Somewhat Inadequate	N	1	0	1	3	2	4	2	2	15
	%	12.5	0.0	33.3	33.3	20.0	50.0	40.0	40.0	29.4
Very Inadequate	N	0	0	0	0	1	2	2	0	5
	%	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.0	25.0	40.0	0.0	9.8
Total		8	3	3	9	10	8	5	5	51
Reasons for Rejecting Students Recommended for the Regional Class										
Very Adequate	N	2	2	2	4	6	1	1	0	18
	%	40.0	66.7	66.7	66.7	66.7	14.3	20.0	0.0	43.9
Somewhat Inadequate	N	3	1	1	1	1	4	0	2	13
	%	60.7	33.3	33.3	16.6	11.1	57.1	0.0	66.7	31.7
Very Inadequate	N	0	0	0	1	2	2	4	1	10
	%	0.0	0.0	0.0	16.6	22.2	28.6	80.0	33.3	24.4
Total		5	3	3	6	9	7	5	3	41
Paperwork Required for Referring Students to the Regional Class										
Very Adequate	N	7	3	2	7	7	1	2	4	33
	%	87.5	100	66.7	87.5	70.0	13.3	40.0	80.0	67.3
Somewhat Inadequate	N	1	0	1	0	1	4	1	1	9
	%	12.5	0.0	33.3	0.0	10.0	57.1	20.0	20.0	18.4
Very Inadequate	N	0	0	0	1	2	2	2	0	7
	%	0.0	0.0	0.0	12.5	20.0	28.6	40.0	0.0	14.3
Total		8	3	3	8	10	7	5	5	49

Table III-14

**Regional Assistance Center Class Teachers' Perceptions
of Training and Materials Provided by Coordinators**

Item	N	%
Region Offered In-Service for Teachers		
Yes	4	57.1
No	3	42.9
Total	7	
Usefulness of Inservice as Perceived by Teachers		
Very Useful	3	75.0
Somewhat Useful	1	25.0
Not Very Useful	0	0.0
Total	4	
Region Offered Written Class Materials		
Yes	7	100
No	0	0.0
Total	7	
Usefulness of Materials as Perceived by Teachers		
Very Useful	4	57.1
Somewhat Useful	3	42.0
Not Useful	0	0.0
Total	7	

Table III-15

Regional Assistance Center Class Teachers' Assessment
of Classroom Space

Item	N	%
Adequacy of Classroom		
Very Adequate	2	33.3
Somewhat Inadequate	3	50.0
Very Inadequate	1	16.7
Total	6	
Regional Classroom Isolated from Regular Classrooms in Host School		
Yes	4	57.1
No	3	42.7
Total	7	
Should Regional Classrooms be Separated from other Rooms?		
Yes	4	57.1
No	3	42.9
Total	7	

Table III-16
Regional Assistance Center Class Teachers'
Apportionment of Class Time

Item	N	%
Proportion of School Day Spent on Individualized Instruction		
More than 3/4	1	14.3
1/2 - 3/4	4	57.1
Less than 1/2	1	14.3
No time	1	14.3
Total	7	

Proportion of School Day Spent on Group Work		
More than 3/4	0	0.0
1/2 - 3/4	3	42.9
Less than 1/2	3	42.9
No time	1	14.2
Total	7	

Class Periods Per Day Spent On:		Number of Periods		Total
		1-2 Periods	Less than 1 Period	
(a) Language Skills	N	5	2	7
	%	71.4	28.6	100
(b) Math	N	5	2	7
	%	71.4	28.6	100
(c) Science/Health	N	3	4	7
	%	42.9	57.1	100
(d) Social Studies	N	4	3	7
	%	57.1	42.9	100
(e) Fine Arts	N	0	7	7
	%	0.0	100	100
(f) PE	N	1	6	7
	%	14.3	85.7	100
(g) Personal Development (self-esteem, taking responsibility, etc.)	N	4	3	7
	%	57.1	42.9	100

Table III-17
Regional Assistance Center Class Teachers' Use
of Various Techniques To Change Behavior

Techniques	Frequency of Use		
	Often N	Occasionally N	Seldom Or Never N
Helping Students Identify Appropriate Behavior	7	0	0
Listening to Students	6	1	0
Modeling Appropriate Behavior	6	1	0
Monitoring Students' Attendance	6	1	0
Helping Students Identify Feelings	5	2	0
Conducting Lessons on Personal Responsibility	4	3	0
Using Behavior Modification	3	4	0
Using Contracts with Students	3	2	0
Conducting Lessons on Self-esteem	3	3	1
Helping Students Set Goals	2	5	0
Role Playing	1	4	2

Table III-18

Regional Assistance Center Class Teachers'
Perceptions of Coordinator Support

Item	N	%
Number of Discussions Between Teacher and Coordinator		
None	0	0.0
1 or 2	0	0.0
3 or 4	2	28.6
More than 4	5	71.4
Total	7	
Helpfulness of Discussions With Coordinators		
Very Helpful	4	57.1
Somewhat Helpful	3	42.9
Not Very Helpful	0	0.0
Total	7	
Coordinator Supportiveness in Providing Materials		
Very Supportive	4	57.1
Somewhat Supportive	3	42.9
Not Very Supportive	0	0.0
Total	7	
Coordinator Supportiveness in Recognizing Teachers' Efforts		
Very Supportive	5	71.4
Somewhat Supportive	2	28.6
Not Very Supportive	0	0.0
Total	7	

CHAPTER IV

THE EXTENDED COUNSELING COMPONENT

Program Description

Chapter IV examines the Extended Counseling (EC) component of the Junior High School Student Assistance Program. For approximately the last four months of the 1985-1986 school year, eight hours of additional counseling time were allotted to each junior high school in LAUSD (N = 73). Each school was to select 20 students with poor academic, discipline, and/or attendance records to participate in the EC component.

Data sources for describing and assessing the EC program were: the student instrument, counselor and principal questionnaires, and the coordinator interview and questionnaire. Student outcomes which included report card and other perceptual data were collected for analysis.

Information Received by Principals

An important role for coordinators was to insure that school personnel were adequately informed about the EC program.

Counselor Characteristics. For the last few months of the 1985-1986 year, each school was allotted eight EC hours per week. Some schools selected one staff member for all eight hours. Other schools split the hours among several individuals. Similarly, in some schools, staff formally applied for the counselor position. In other schools, principals assigned specific individuals to the programs.

Counseling Hours. The EC program was funded for the school year.

Evening and Weekend EC Hours. The program proposal stated that evening and weekend counseling should be scheduled.

Training and Materials. Coordinator provided staff development to EC counselors.

Coordinator Support. Part of the coordinator's role involved consulting with individual counselors about student difficulties.

Student Characteristics

Table IV-1 describes some background characteristics of students participating in Extended Counseling (EC). If the sample was representative of EC participants, seven of every ten was male. The mean age was 14 and 85% of the participants were between 13 and 15. There were more 7th graders participating in EC than 8th or 9th graders. The data-gathering instruments did not ask whether the student had ever been retained in grade.

Almost one-fourth of the EC sample was or had been an Opportunity Transfer student. Nearly three-fourths of the participants received counseling for 1-2 months and the other one-fourth, 3-4 months.

Table IV-2 depicts background characteristics of the EC sample for which there was regional variation. Sample schools were selected on the basis of race and ethnic distributions for each region.

Spanish was the home language for 29% of the sample students. It was the home language of almost all of the Region G sample and more than one-third of the Region B and H participants. A vast majority of the EC students did not comprehend instructions given in English.

STUDENT OUTCOMES

Report Card Data

On student questionnaires, coordinators recorded the number of Fails, Unsatisfactory marks, absences, tardies, and the grade point averages for Spring 1985, Fall 1985, and Spring 1986.

Number of Failing Grades. Table IV-3 presents the mean number of failing grades on report cards for three semesters. The differences between means, the significance levels, and the number of cases were used for the comparisons.

Data for the total sample showed no significant changes in F grades. EC students averaged about 1.3 fails in Spring 1985 and 1986 and one fail in Fall 1985. The only statistically significant change occurred in Region C where students averaged 2.8 fails for Spring 1985 and 1.3 in Spring 1986, a reduction of 1.5. In general, the average number of F's seemed low for a counseling intervention program designed, at least in part, to remediate academic deficiencies. Analyses showed that student age, grade, time in the EC program, and comprehension of English had no effects on the number of F grades.

Grade Point Average. EC students in Table IV-4 had a mean grade point average (GPA) of 1.79 in Spring 1985, 1.48 in Fall 1985, and 1.52 in Spring 1986. These differences were not statistically significant. Notice, however, that the mean GPAs were below a C average. In general, though selected students were probably not at the bottom of their schools, neither were they high achieving. However, Region C did not fit this pattern. Region C EC component students had F averages for 1985-1986.

Unsatisfactory Marks. Students in the EC component (Table IV-5) received almost two more U's in Work Habits on the spring 1986 report card than on the spring 1985 report card, i.e., they did worse. Comparing fall 1985 with spring 1986, students still performed worse on their most recent report card. By region, all significant differences are in the undesired direction - toward more rather than fewer U's in Work Habits.

Students who received counseling significantly reduced Unsatisfactory marks in Cooperation between spring 1985 and spring 1986, i.e., there is an average decrease of 1.2 U's over the year. (See Table IV-6.) However, when fall 1985 is compared with spring 1986, the difference is not significant and in the opposite direction - toward more U's. Region E students made the greatest improvement in Cooperation marks from an average of 4.31 U's in spring 1985 to 1.93 U's in spring 1986. However, they made no improvement from fall 1985 to spring 1986. Findings for the other regions show no consistent pattern. When there are significant differences between spring 1985 and spring 1986, there are no significant differences in the fall-spring comparisons. The small differences which did occur were toward more rather than fewer U's. Potential predictor variables such as age, grade, time in program, and comprehension of English had no effects on Unsatisfactory report card marks.

Attendance and Tardiness. Absence data for the total sample and each region displayed in Table IV-7. The EC students averaged 9.07 absences in spring 1985 and 15.45 absences a year later. Although their absences increased, the difference was not statistically significant. For several regions, (e.g., A, D, E, F, and G), attendance was apparently not used as a criterion for selection most of their EC participants because

the mean absences were low, i.e., under 10 for the semester.

In Regions C and H, students had significantly more absences in spring 1986 than spring 1985. It is assumed that a majority of the spring 1986 absences occurred before counseling began and were a factor in student selection. However, a closer examination of student attendance records would be necessary to determine if this assumption is correct.

Table IV-8 indicates no change in the mean number of tardies for EC participants. All three semester means are low, below 10.

Significant changes in tardiness records occurred in Regions E and F. In E, the spring 1986 tardy count was higher than a year earlier; and in F, there was improvement (e.g., from an average of 22 tardies in Spring 1985 to 6 tardies in spring 1986).

Counselor Observations of Students

Students Difficulties. Counselors rated the frequency with which EC students exhibited eight different characteristics which often affect classroom performance and participation. Results are in Table IV-9. Lack of concentration was first on the list, i.e., it was frequently observed in 93% of the sample. A majority of the counselees occasionally exhibited the other seven difficulties (which included: hyperactivity, confusion following directions, difficulty with logical reasoning, attention seeking, shallow feelings for others, general unhappiness, and difficulty speaking in complete sentences). Summing the first two frequency categories, counselors observed each of these problem characteristics in three-fourths of the EC students. However, the problems were not observed in isolation from one another. The last seven items were significantly correlated. That is, when a student exhibits one

problem, all seven others were likely to be observed. The eighth item, lack of concentration, was significantly related to the number of F grades.

Student Improvement. Counselors assessed the degree to which students improved in ten different areas. Findings are found in Table IV-10 and are listed from areas of greatest to least improvement.

Counselors perceived more students to show great improvement in self control than anything else (i.e., 73.3%). According to the counselors, a majority of students also greatly improved the amount of work completed and the ability to express feelings in an appropriate manner.

Counselors indicated that a majority of students made great or some improvement in their attitudes toward school, beliefs about their own ability, respect for others, ability to follow directions, and general self esteem. The least gains were made in willingness to cooperate with school officials and ability to concentrate.

None of the improvement items were significantly related to report card data. The number of F's and U's issued by classroom teachers was not significantly related to counselors' perceptions of positive student change. Correlations among improvement items were not high enough to construct an index, i.e., a student may improve in one area and not others.

PROGRAM OUTCOMES

Information Received by Principals

An important role for coordinators was to insure that school personnel were adequately informed about the EC program. Principals assessed this communication, and results are found in Table IV-11. Nearly all principals stated that coordinators discussed program goals with them (Item 1). Three

principals said coordinators did not convey EC goals.

Principals evaluated the adequacy of information they received about EC goals. Seventy-three percent said information was very adequate; 23% said it was somewhat inadequate; and 4% said it was very inadequate. By region, nearly all principals in Regions A, B, C, D, and H felt they received very adequate information. More than one-third of the principals in Region E, F, and G rated communication of goals as somewhat or very inadequate.

In response to an open-ended question, several principals said they would like coordinators to introduce the program to all school staff, advisory councils, and the P.T.A. very early in the academic year. A few also desired more specific guidelines for implementing EC on the school level.

Counselor Characteristics

Each school was allotted eight EC hours per week the last few months of the 1985-1986 year. Some schools selected one staff member for all eight hours. Other schools split the hours among several individuals. Similarly, in some schools, staff formally applied for the counselor position. In other schools, principals assigned specific individuals to the programs. Effects of these varying selection procedures on the EC program cannot be ascertained this year.

A total of 137 EC counselors returned questionnaires (See Item 1 of Table IV-12). Sixty-eight of the 73 junior high schools were represented. Five schools had no counselor respondents.

Forty-four percent of the EC counselors were regular classroom teachers as 12% taught special education. Another forty-four percent were grade counselors or deans. Some coordinators questioned whether grade

counselors and deans would be enthusiastic about auxiliary counseling hours (after handling "problems" all day).

Caseload. Table IV-13 portrays the number of students seen by each counselor. One-fifth of the EC counselors worked with five or fewer students. At the other end of the spectrum, a fourth counseled 16-20 students. The current research design does not permit analysis of how this variation may have affected student outcomes.

Counseling Hours

Allocation of Hours. All coordinators and most principals and EC counselors stated that more auxiliary counseling hours were needed. One coordinator suggested that EC funds should be allocated to schools on the basis of enrollment. Schools with widely divergent enrollments received the same number of hours.

The program was funded for a traditional school year. Coordinators and principals of year-round schools felt funding for the additional two months was very important. They indicated that for those students on-track during the summer months, counseling was abruptly terminated in June while their needs for counseling continued.

Evening and Weekend EC Hours. The program proposal stated that evening and weekend counseling hours should be scheduled. Table IV-14 shows fewer than one-fourth of the counselors (22.7%) were assigned evening hours, and 8% were scheduled for weekend hours. Regions C and F had the most hours available outside the regular school day, and Regions A and B had the fewest.

Although coordinators had concerns relative to the availability of

extended counselor hours, they also observed students waiting for late afternoon EC appointments which caused some counselees to experience transportation problems.

Training and Materials

A majority of the counselors said coordinators provided staff development (See Table IV-15). But, more than a third of the EC counselors said no training occurred. All coordinators emphasized that they, in fact, conducted staff development meetings. During the coordinator interviews, two problems surfaced regarding training: 1) They reported that some principals did not provide time for counselors to attend meetings. 2) Some counselors did not attend on their own time. This attendance problem seemed to exist in some regions more than others. For example, in Regions C, G, and H, a majority of counselors said inservices were not offered. All counselors in Region A said the coordinator offered training. About half of those who attended inservices rated them very useful, and the other half rated inservices as somewhat useful.

Coordinators believed that the program design and budget should reflect the importance of reasonable, ongoing staff development. Many principals agreed. In the recommendations section of their questionnaires, principals said staff development meetings should be increased and expanded to share ideas, problems, and techniques.

Eighty-six percent of the counselors said coordinators provided counseling materials (See Table IV-16). Regions G and H account for most of the counselors who said written materials were not provided, i.e., 46.7% in G and 50% in H. About half the counselors said the particular materials they received were very useful; 40% said the materials were

somewhat useful. No significant differences appeared by region.

Several principals suggested that EC staff would profit from videotapes of different types of counseling.

Counseling Techniques

Counselors were asked how often they used each of fifteen different counseling techniques. Table IV-17 presents the number and percent of counselors who often employed each technique.

Basic counseling techniques were most often used, e.g., empathetic listening (99.3%), identifying feelings (85.2%), and setting counseling goals (75.9%). The counselors also used techniques well-suited to classroom discipline problems, e.g., helping student identify appropriate and inappropriate behavior (89.6%), modeling appropriate behavior (74.3%), and teaching students how to express feelings appropriately (70.6%). Among the least-used techniques were the following: behavior modification (45.6%), group counseling (41.5%), and contracts (33.8%). The technique of involving students' classroom teachers and families in counseling sessions was at the bottom of the list.

Supervision of Counselors

The supervision of counselors was a concern by both the school and region coordinators. Table IV-18 describes school-level supervision. (These data came from the principals' questionnaire.) Twenty-two percent of the counselors were supervised directly by the principal, 15% by the assistant principal, 49% by the head counselor, and 12% by deans. Principals did not mention any supervision problems. However, coordinators had some concerns. All required a log of counselor hours. There was no

standard form used among regions, nor were there standardized submission dates. In addition, regular grade counselors were required to work past the end of classes each day, the exact amount of time determined by the principal. When regular grade counselors served as EC counselors, coordinators wanted to insure that the EC hours were auxiliary. For example, if a grade counselor is expected to work until 4 p.m. normally, the 3-4 p.m. hour should not count for the EC program.

Coordinator Support

Part of the coordinators role involved consulting with individual EC counselors about student difficulties. Over half the counselors evaluated their coordinators as very supportive. In contrast, 15% indicated the coordinator was not very supporting (see Table IV-19).

Counselors were asked about the recognition they received from coordinators. This seemed to be less of a problem than discussing student difficulties. More than two-thirds felt their efforts were adequately recognized by the coordinator. Only 8.2% of the counselors viewed the coordinator as not very supportive.

Continuation of the Extended Counseling Component

All principals who returned questionnaires believed the Extended Counseling Program should continue. Most said it should be expanded. Similarly, 84.2% of the EC counselors wanted to serve in that role again (Table IV-20), while nineteen counselors (15.8%) did not. At least 75% of respondents in each region wanted to return as counselors except Region D (where 53.8% say they would voluntarily serve again). All counselors in Regions A, B, C and H wanted to return to the program next year.

SUMMARY

Each junior high school received eight hours per week of auxiliary counseling during the latter half of the 1985-1986 year. Each school was to select twenty students with poor academic, discipline, and/or attendance records.

Data for the total sample indicated no significant reduction in the average number of failing grades received on the last report card. Grade point averages did not improve significantly; on the average, students retained a D average for all three semesters. These data vary greatly by region.

Program participants averaged more unsatisfactory work habits marks in spring 1986 than the previous two semesters. There was no consistent trend in cooperation marks and no significant reduction in absences. The short period for this counseling program apparently did not result in improved report cards.

Although report card data do not indicate major change, the counselors perceived that a majority of the student participants improved in their self control, amount of work completed, appropriate expressions of feelings, attitudes toward school, respect for others, and self esteem. The counselors' ratings may have captured more subtle and incremental changes which should be reflected in improved marks at a later time.

A variety of methods were used to select the counseling staff and student participants at each school. Each region devised its own procedures to supervise counselor hours and its own staff development program. Counselor attendance at inservices was a problem in some regions.

The program proposal stipulated the inclusion of evening and weekend counseling hours. Some regions had more of these hours available than others. Sometimes, students faced waiting and transportation problems when scheduled for later appointments.

All school principals and coordinators favored continuation and expansion of the Extended Counseling program. A vast majority of the counselors wanted to continue working in the program.

Table IV-1
Background Characteristics of Students in the
Extended Counseling Program

Item	N	%
Sex		
Male	74	69.8
Female	32	30.2
Total	106	
Age		
10	1	0.9
11	0	0.0
12	7	6.2
13	29	25.7
14	40	35.4
15	25	22.1
16	11	9.7
Total	113	
Grade		
6th	10	8.8
7th	47	41.2
8th	33	28.9
9th	24	21.1
Total	114	
Student Ever Issued an "Opportunity Transfer"		
Yes	26	23.4
No	85	76.6
Total	111	
Length of Participation in Extended Counseling Program		
Less than 1 month	22	20.0
1-2 months	59	53.6
3-4 months	29	26.4
Longer than 4 months	0	0.0
Total	110	

Table IV-2

Background Characteristics of Students in the Extended
Counseling Program by Region

Item		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	Total
Ethnicity										
Native American	N	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	2
	%	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.7	7.7	0.0	1.8
Asian	N	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	%	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Black	N	2	7	15	8	4	0	0	0	36
	%	12.5	43.8	100.0	50.0	26.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	31.9
Hispanic	N	10	9	0	4	4	7	12	4	50
	%	62.5	56.3	0.0	25.0	26.7	46.7	92.3	57.1	44.2
White	N	2	0	0	4	7	6	0	3	22
	%	12.5	0.0	0.0	25.0	46.7	40.0	0.0	42.9	19.5
Filipino	N	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2
	%	6.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.7	0.0	0.0	1.8
Pacific Islander	N	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	%	6.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.9
Total		16	16	15	16	15	15	13	7	113
Home Language										
English	N	10	10	15	11	13	12	1	4	76
	%	71.4	62.5	100.0	73.3	81.3	85.7	9.1	66.7	71.0
Spanish	N	4	6	0	4	3	2	10	2	31
	%	28.6	37.5	0.0	26.7	18.8	14.3	90.9	33.3	29.0
Total		14	16	15	15	16	14	11	6	107
Ability to Understand Instructions in English										
Very Well	N	1	2	1	7	0	2		1	14
	%	6.3	12.5	6.7	100.0	0.0	13.3	No Data	14.3	15.4
Partly	N	0	1	10	0	0	5		6	22
	%	0.0	6.3	66.7	0.0	0.0	33.3		85.7	24.2
Not Well	N	15	13	4	0	15	8	No Data	0	55
	%	93.8	81.3	26.7	0.0	100	53.3	Data	0.0	60.4
Total		16	16	15	7	15	15		7	91

***p .001

Table IV-3

Mean Number of Failing Grades of Students in the
Extended Counseling Program

Group	Semester Means			Difference of Means	N
	Spring '85	Fall '85	Spring '86		
Total Sample	1.30	- -	1.35	-0.05	115
	- -	1.07	1.35	-0.28	115
Region A	1.00	- -	1.25	-0.25	16
	- -	0.94	1.25	-0.31	16
Region B	1.50	- -	1.81	-0.31	16
	- -	1.06	1.31	-0.75	16
Region C	2.80	- -	1.33	1.47*	15
	- -	1.07	1.33	-0.27	15
Region D	1.06	- -	1.00	.06	16
	- -	1.06	1.00	.06	16
Region E	1.00	- -	1.44	-0.44	16
	- -	1.25	1.43	-0.19	16
Region F	1.07	- -	1.40	-0.33	15
	- -	1.20	1.40	-0.20	15
Region G	0.79	- -	0.57	0.21	14
	- -	0.36	0.57	-0.21	14
Region H	1.00	- -	2.57	-1.57	7
	- -	2.14	2.57	-0.43	7

*p .05
 **p .01
 ***p .001

Table IV-4
Mean Grade Point Average of Students in the
Extended Counseling Program

Group	Semester Means			Difference of Means	N
	Spring '85	Fall '85	Spring '86		
Total Sample	1.79	- -	1.52	-0.27	117
	- -	1.48	1.52	0.04	116
Region A	1.90	- -	1.37	-0.53	16
	- -	1.52	1.37	-0.15	16
Region B	1.97	- -	1.50	-0.47	12
	- -	1.15	1.50	0.35	12
Region C	1.25	- -	0.51	-0.74*	16
	- -	0.96	0.51	-0.45	16
Region D	1.53	- -	1.50	-0.03	12
	- -	1.22	1.50	0.28	12
Region E	2.29	- -	2.09	-0.20	16
	- -	2.01	2.09	0.08	16
Region F	2.14	- -	1.73	-0.41	14
	- -	1.76	1.73	-0.03	14
Region G	1.89	- -	2.36	0.47	16
	- -	2.09	2.36	0.27	16
Region H	1.40	- -	1.09	-0.31	15
	- -	1.04	1.09	0.05	15

*p .05

Table IV-5
Mean Number of Unsatisfactory Work Habits Marks of
Students in the Extended Counseling Program

Group	Semester Means			Difference of Means	N
	Spring '85	Fall '85	Spring '86		
Total Sample	1.51	- -	3.35	-1.83***	115
	- -	2.71	3.34	-0.63**	113
Region A	1.25	- -	3.44	-2.19**	16
	- -	2.33	3.40	-1.07	15
Region B	1.56	- -	3.56	-2.00***	16
	- -	2.80	3.53	-0.73	15
Region C	2.93	- -	3.60	-0.67	15
	- -	2.67	- -	-0.93	15
Region D	0.75	- -	3.25	-2.5***	16
	- -	2.50	- -	-0.75*	16
Region E	1.69	- -	3.75	-2.06***	16
	- -	2.69	- -	-1.06*	16
Region F	1.93	- -	3.53	-1.60*	15
	- -	3.73	- -	0.20	15
Region G	0.50	- -	1.86	-1.36**	14
	- -	1.71	- -	-0.14	14
Region H	1.43	- -	4.00	-2.57*	7
	- -	3.71	- -	-0.29	7

*p .05
**p .01
***p .001

Table IV-6

Mean Number of Unsatisfactory Cooperation Marks
of Students in the Extended Counseling Program

Group	Semester Means			Difference of Means	N
	Spring '85	Fall '85	Spring '86		
Total Sample	3.38	- -	2.18	1.2***	115
	- -	1.90	- -	-.27	113
Region A	2.81	- -	1.38	1.44**	16
	- -	1.07	1.33	-.27	15
Region B	3.69	- -	3.00	0.69	16
	- -	1.73	- -	-1.27	15
Region C	4.27	- -	2.87	1.40**	15
	- -	2.80	- -	-0.07	15
Region D	2.69	- -	1.75	0.94	16
	- -	1.56	- -	-0.19	16
Region E	4.31	- -	1.93	2.37***	16
	- -	2.00	1.94	0.06	16
Region F	3.93	- -	2.87	1.07	15
	- -	2.47	- -	-0.40	15
Region G	1.79	- -	1.21	0.57	14
	- -	1.29	- -	0.07	14
Region H	3.57	- -	2.71	0.85	7
	- -	2.71	- -	0.00	7

**p .01

***p .001

Table IV-7
Mean Number of Absences of Students in the
Extended Counseling Program

Group	Semester Means			Difference of Means	N
	Spring '85	Fall '85	Spring '86		
Total Sample	9.07 - -	- - 11.90	15.45 - -	-6.38	106 106
Region A	6.71 - -	- - 7.64	6.14 - -	0.57	14 14
Region B	17.77 - -	- - 15.92	18.15 - -	-0.38	13 13
Region C	14.20 - -	- - 24.13	40.60 - -	-26.40**	15 15
Region D	5.67 - -	- - 7.33	10.00 - -	-4.33	9 9
Region E	3.13 - -	- - 7.19	5.25 - -	-2.12	16 16
Region F	8.78 - -	- - 7.00	8.56 - -	0.22	9 9
Region G	5.94 - -	- - 7.56	9.19 - -	-3.25	16 16
Region H	10.57 - -	- - 15.50	22.07 - -	-11.5*	14 14

*p .05

**p .01

Table IV-8
Mean Number of Tardies of Students in the
Extended Counseling Program

Group	Semester Means			Difference of Means	N
	Spring '85	Fall '85	Spring '86		
Total Sample	6.35	- -	6.24	0.11	97
	- -	6.29	- -	0.05	97
Region A	5.29	- -	3.93	1.38	14
	- -	2.71	- -	-1.22	14
Region B	1.58	- -	2.50	-0.92	12
	- -	3.08	- -	0.58	12
Region C	11.07	- -	4.93	6.14	14
	- -	9.14	- -	4.21	14
Region D	3.67	- -	6.78	-3.11	9
	- -	3.56	- -	-3.22	9
Region E	0.22	- -	8.56	-8.34*	9
	- -	0.75	- -	-7.81*	8
Region F	22.00	- -	6.38	15.62*	8
	- -	22.88	- -	16.5***	8
Region G	6.19	- -	8.00	-1.81	16
	- -	6.13	- -	-1.87	16
Region H	3.87	- -	8.93	-5.06*	15
	- -	5.47	- -	-3.46	15

*p .05
***p .001

Table IV-9
Student Difficulties Observed by Counselors

Difficulty	Frequency						N
	Frequently		Occasionally		Seldom or Never		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Lack of Concentration	96	93.2	6	5.8	1	1.0	103
Hyperactivity or Restlessness*	30	27.3	65	59.1	15	13.6	110
Confusion Following Directions*	25	22.5	64	57.7	22	19.8	111
Difficulty with Logical Reasoning*	24	21.8	71	64.5	15	13.6	110
Demands Attention*	24	22.4	59	55.1	24	22.4	107
Shallow Feelings For Others*	25	23.1	54	50.1	29	26.9	108
Unhappiness*	31	29.2	56	52.8	19	17.9	106
Difficulty Speaking in Complete Sentences*	28	25.2	66	59.5	17	15.3	111

*Correlations among starred items are above .48 and are significant at the .001 level.

Table IV -10

Counselors' Perceptions of Student Improvement in the
Extended Counseling Program

Item	Degree of Improvement						N
	Great Improvement		Some Improvement		Little or No Improvement		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Self Control	74	73.3	25	24.8	2	2.0	101
Amount of Work Completed	61	61.0	36	36.0	3	3.0	100
Express Feelings Appropriately	53	55.2	31	32.3	12	12.5	96
Attitude Towards School	36	36.4	49	49.5	14	14.1	99
Beliefs About Own Academic Ability	25	33.8	27	36.5	22	29.7	74
Respect for Others	29	31.2	48	51.6	16	17.2	93
Following Directions	28	29.2	49	51.0	19	19.8	96
General Self-Esteem	19	19.2	56	56.6	24	24.2	99
Willingness to Cooperate	10	14.1	27	38.0	34	47.9	71
Ability to Concentrate	7	11.9	7	11.9	45	76.3	59

Table IV-11
Principals' Assessments of Information Received
About the Extended Counseling Program

Item		Total
Regional Coordinator Discussed Program Goals		
Yes	N %	49 94.2
No	N %	3 5.8
Total	N %	52 100
Adequacy of Information Received About Program Goals		
Adequate	N %	38 73.0
Somewhat Inadequate	N %	12 23.0
Very Inadequate	N %	2 4.0
Total	N %	52 100

Table IV-12

Counselor Respondents by Region and Regular School Position

Item		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	Total
Counselor Respondents	N	17	6	12	16	35	26	15	10	137
	%	12.4	4.4	8.8	11.7	25.5	19.0	10.9	7.3	100
Regular Position										
Classroom Teacher	N	6	2	7	8	17	9	3	3	55
	%	35.3	40.0	70.0	61.5	50.0	37.5	25.0	30.0	44.0
Special Education Teacher	N	4	0	2	0	4	0	1	4	15
	%	23.5	0.0	20.0	0.0	11.8	0.0	8.3	40.0	12.0
School Counselor	N	5	3	0	3	10	11	8	2	42
	%	29.4	60.0	0.0	23.1	29.4	45.8	66.7	20.0	33.6
Student Attendance and Adjustment Counselor	N	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	%	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Dean	N	2	0	1	2	3	4	0	1	13
	%	11.8	0.0	10.0	15.4	8.8	16.7	0.0	10.0	10.4
Total		17	5	10	13	34	24	12	10	125

Table IV-13
Number of Students Counseled by Region

Number of Students*		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	Total
0 - 5 Students	N	0	4	1	3	11	3	5	2	29
	%	0.0	66.7	8.3	18.8	31.4	11.5	35.7	20.0	21.3
6 - 10 Students	N	7	1	8	3	13	15	5	4	56
	%	41.2	16.7	66.7	18.8	37.1	57.7	35.7	40.0	41.2
11 - 15 Students	N	2	0	0	6	5	5	0	0	18
	%	11.8	0.0	0.0	37.5	14.3	19.2	0.0	0.0	13.2
16 - 20 Students	N	8	1	3	4	6	3	4	4	33
	%	47.1	16.7	25.0	25.0	17.1	11.5	28.6	40.0	24.3
Total		17	6	12	16	35	26	14	10	136

*p .05

Table IV-14
Evening and Weekend Counseling Hours Scheduled by Region

Hours*		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	Total
Evening Hours Scheduled	N	1	0	3	3	7	12	2	3	31
	%	5.9	0.0	25.0	18.7	20.0	46.2	13.3	30.0	22.7
Weekend Hours Scheduled	N	0	1	4	2	0	2	2	0	11
	%	0.0	16.7	33.3	12.5	0.0	7.6	13.3	0.0	8.0

*p .05

Table IV-15
Counselors' Perceptions of Staff Development by Region

Item		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	Total
In-Service Training Offered by Region**										
Yes	N	17	4	3	12	18	20	3	4	81
	%	100	66.7	25.0	75.0	54.5	76.9	23.1	40.0	60.9
No	N	0	2	9	4	15	6	10	6	52
	%	0.0	33.3	75.0	25.0	45.5	23.1	76.9	60.0	39.1
Total		17	6	12	16	33	26	13	10	133
Perceived Usefulness of In-Service Training										
Very Useful	N	12	3	1	6	5	6	1	1	35
	%	70.6	100	33.3	50.0	35.7	33.3	50.0	33.3	48.6
Somewhat Useful	N	5	0	2	6	8	12	1	1	35
	%	29.4	0.0	66.7	50.0	57.1	66.7	50.0	33.3	48.6
Not Useful	N	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	2
	%	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	7.1	0.0	0.0	33.3	2.8
Total		17	3	3	12	14	18	2	3	72

**p .01

Table IV-16
Counselors' Perceptions of Counseling Materials Received
by Region

Item		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	Total
Provided With Written Counseling Materials**										
Yes	N	16	6	9	16	31	26	8	5	117
	%	94.1	100	75.0	100	91.2	100	53.3	50.0	86.0
No	N	1	0	3	0	3	0	7	5	19
	%	5.9	0.0	25.0	0.0	8.8	0.0	46.7	50.0	14.0
Total		5	6	12	16	34	26	15	10	136
Perceived Usefulness of Written Counseling Materials*										
Very Useful	N	10	5	2	8	17	17	1	2	62
	%	62.5	83.3	22.2	50.0	60.7	65.4	12.5	40.0	54.4
Somewhat Useful	N	4	1	7	8	10	8	6	2	46
	%	25.0	16.7	77.8	50.0	35.7	30.8	75.0	40.0	40.4
Not Useful	N	2	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	6
	%	12.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.6	3.8	12.5	20.0	5.3
Total		16	6	9	16	28	26	8	5	114

*p .05
**p .01

Table IV-17
Counselors' Use of Various Counseling Techniques

Number Who "Often" Use Each Technique ^a	N	%
1. Listening	136	99.3
2. Helping Students Identify Appropriate and Inappropriate Behavior	121	89.6
3. Helping Students Identify Feelings	115	85.2
4. Setting Counseling Goals	101	75.9
5. Modeling Appropriate Behavior	101	74.3
6. Teaching Students How To Express Feelings Appropriately	96	70.6
7. Helping Students Set Goals	91	66.9
8. Monitoring Students' Attendance	86	62.8
9. Teaching Decision-Making Skills	84	62.2
10. Monitoring Classroom Behavior	79	59.0
11. Using Behavior Modification	62	45.6
12. Group Counseling	56	41.5
13. Using "Contracts"	46	33.8
14. Involving Classroom Teachers	45	33.1
15. Involving Family Members	44	32.4

Note.^a Shown is the percent who checked the often use category.

Table IV-18

Designated School Supervisor of Counselors by Region

Respondent		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	Total
School Supervisor										
Principal	N	0	3	2	1	2	2	1	2	13
	%	0.0	75.0	50.0	12.5	20.0	16.7	12.5	40.0	22.0
Assistant Principal	N	2	0	1	4	0	2	0	0	9
	%	25.0	0.0	25.0	50.0	0.0	16.7	0.0	0.0	15.2
Head Counselor	N	6	1	0	3	6	7	4	2	29
	%	75.0	25.0	0.0	37.5	60.0	58.3	50.0	40.0	49.2
Other - Dean	N	0	0	1	0	1	1	3	1	7
	%	0.0	0.0	25.0	0.0	10.0	8.3	37.5	20.0	11.9
Other (Dept. Chair)	N	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
	%	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.7
Total		8	4	4	8	10	12	8	5	59 100

Table IV-19
Counselors' Perceptions of Coordinator Support

Item		Total
Coordinator Supportiveness in Discussing Students' Difficulties*		
Very Supportive	N	65
	%	54.6
Somewhat Supportive	N	36
	%	30.3
Not Very Supportive	N	18
	%	15.1
	N	119
Total	%	100
Coordinator Supportiveness in Recognizing Counselors' Work*		
Very Supportive	N	84
	%	68.9
Somewhat Supportive	N	28
	%	23.0
Not Very Supportive	N	10
	%	8.2
	N	122
Total	%	100

*p .05

Table IV-20

Counselors' Desires to Continue Work in the
Extended Counseling Program

Item		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	Total
Desires to Work in the Extended Counseling* Program										
Yes	N	15	6	12	7	25	18	9	9	101
	%	100	100	100	53.8	83.3	78.3	75.0	100	84.2
No	N	0	0	0	6	5	5	3	0	19
	%	0.0	0.0	0.0	46.2	16.7	21.7	25.0	0.0	15.8
Total		15	6	12	13	30	23	12	9	120 100

*p .05

Table IV-21

**Principals' Assessments of Information Received About the
Extended Counseling Program by Region**

Item		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	Total
Regional Coordinator Discussed Program Goals										
Yes	N	8	4	3	8	9	9	3	5	49
	%	100	100	100	100	100	90.0	60.0	100	94.2
No	N	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	3
	%	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.0	40.7	0.0	5.8
Total		8	4	3	8	9	10	5	5	52
Adequacy of Information Received About Program Goals										
Very Adequate	N	7	4	3	7	6	5	2	4	38
	%	87.5	100	100	87.5	60.0	55.5	40.0	80.0	73.0
Somewhat Inadequate	N	0	0	0	1	4	4	2	1	12
	%	0.0	0.0	0.0	12.5	40.0	44.5	40.0	20.0	23.0
Very Inadequate	N	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2
	%	12.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.0	0.0	4.0
Total		8	4	3	8	10	9	5	5	52

CHAPTER V
THE OPPORTUNITY ROOM COMPONENT

Program Description

Regions received funds from the Junior High School Student Assistance Program to establish an Opportunity Room program in the schools which would provide remedial instructional programs and personal guidance to student participants.

A student data gathering instrument, OR teacher questionnaire, school principal questionnaire, and the coordinator's interview and questionnaire were the data sources used to examine the OR program.

Sample Characteristics

A total of 123 student data gathering instruments were completed. Table V-1 describes some characteristics of the OR sample. This group had a higher proportion of female participants than the other two programs. The majority of participants were 14 and 15 years of age. Eighth graders were somewhat overrepresented in the sample and seventh graders underrepresented. Only six in the sample were Opportunity Transfers. More than half the sample were in the program 3-4 months.

Table V-2 shows regional variation on three additional background characteristics. Spanish was the home language of 29% of the total sample and for larger proportions of the Region D, G, and H participants. Almost 75% of the sampled participants had some or great difficulty understanding instructions given in English.

STUDENT OUTCOMES

Report Card Marks

Number of Failing Grades. The OR sample averaged 1.09 F's in spring 1985, 1.38 F's in fall 1985, and 1.51 F's in spring 1986 (see Table V-3). Overall, this group of students was gradually performing worse, i.e., the mean number of F's increased over time.

By region, most changes were not statistically significant. In Region C, OR participants were doing significantly and steadily worse, i.e., the number of F's markedly increases. Region G participants average less than one F grade all three semesters. These two regions (C and G) seemed to employ different selection criteria for the program. In general, it appeared that a few weeks in the OR program was insufficient intervention to bring about major academic improvements.

Grade Point Average (GPA). The mean Grade Point Averages (GPAs) of the OR sample dropped and the number of F's increased. In Table V-4, students averaged a 1.66 GPA in spring 1985, and 1.42 and 1.40 GPAs the last two semesters. By region, there was little significant change except in Region C, where the students' grades dropped dramatically. The GPAs of Region G participants were relatively higher (close to 2.0). Apparently, there were not consensual selection criteria across regions: Region C selected students having serious academic difficulties. Participants in most regions needed the additional assistance provided by the OR, for their mean GPAs were significantly below 2.0.

Unsatisfactory Marks. Table V-5 showed no change in Work Habits marks for the OR sample. Participants averaged about three Unsatisfactory

marks all three semesters. Work Habits were a problem for many OR participants. There was some variation by region. The Region G group averaged the fewest U's (under two); the Regions C and E samples averaged over four U's on their most recent report cards. These findings emphasized differing selection criteria among regions.

There were no significant trends in Cooperation marks (Table V-6). OR students averaged between 2 and 3 U's all three semesters. Some variation by region was indicated. Regions A, D, and G participants averaged less than two Unsatisfactory Cooperation marks on the last report card; while Regions B and C participants averaged more than three.

As with subject grades, short-term placement in the Opportunity Room did not stimulate great change in work habits or cooperation.

Attendance. Over the past three semesters, the OR participants had been attending school less often; they had more absences at the end of the program (Table V-7). However, the increased absences may have occurred before OR placement. The sample had mean absences of 12.6. Apparently, absences were not frequently used in selecting OR participants nor were tardies. The total sample and every region averaged below ten tardies per semester.

Teacher Observations

While relatively short term participation in OR did not result in improved report cards, less tangible results may occur. OR teachers assessed each student's improvement in several areas. Table V-8 presents results organized into four groups according to response patterns. Group I assessed the ability to express feelings appropriately. Almost

the entire sample showed great improvement. Group 2 assessed the amount of work completed, willingness to cooperate with school officials, taking responsibility, and reading skills. The vast majority of the sample showed some improvement. Group 3 assessed attitudes toward school, self esteem, respect for others, concentration, and self control. Approximately half the participants improved and half did not. Group 4 consisted of the ability to follow directions. Three-fourths of the sample showed little or no improvement. Length of participation in the OR program did not affect teachers' perceptions of student improvement.

PROGRAM OUTCOMES

Program Definition

The lack of consistent, statistically significant, or improved student outcomes may be due, in part, to great diversity, and perhaps vagueness, in the conception and structuring of the Opportunity Room component. The OR was mentioned only briefly when the Junior High School Student Assistance Program (JHSSAP) was conceived on paper and presented to the Board. Of the three program components, the OR appeared to receive the least amount of attention throughout the year from those involved with the JHSSAP.

Coordinators' verbal reports indicate that ORs were located only at certain schools. A list of schools with ORs funded by the JHSSAP was not available.

Coordinator interviews indicate little uniformity in the goals and structure of the OR component. In some regions, principals (with other school staff, perhaps) decided ORs' structure, goals, and function.

According to the coordinators, some regions allowed the OR to serve as "referral" or "in house" suspension rooms. The number and names of schools which implemented the basic original objectives, "a remedial academic and personal guidance program" in their ORs, are unknown.

Authority and responsibility for the OR component were also unclear. In the interview, three coordinators reported that they were given little or no responsibility for the ORs. They said they were told by regional superiors to "leave it (the OR component) alone." Elaborations were not provided.

Information collected indicated that the OR program was implemented in widely varying fashions throughout the district. Data gathering for the program description did not discriminate between ORs as remedial rooms and ORs as referral rooms. As a result, there were few general or significant characteristics of the OR program to report.

Information Received by Principals

Principals with ORs in their schools assessed information received about the goals, student selection criteria, and curriculum. Results appear in Table V-9. Nearly three-fourths of the principals believe they received very adequate communication about OR goals. About one-fourth said this communication was somewhat or very inadequate. Similarly, a majority said they received very adequate information about student selection criteria and the OR curriculum. One-third thought this communication could be improved.

Teacher Respondents

Sixty OR teachers returned questionnaires. Their distribution by

region is shown in Table V-10. There was wide variation in the respondents by regions due to the diverse ways in which ORs were staffed. In some schools, one teacher staffed the room for more than one class period; in other schools, several teachers staffed the room, each for one period. Almost all OR staff were regular classroom teachers. Seven percent were special education teachers.

Training and Materials

Staff development for OR teachers was not emphasized in 1985-1986. About one-fourth of the staff said inservices were held (see Table V-11). Half said they received printed classroom materials. Regional differences were significant for this item. A large majority of respondents in Regions A, B, and C said classroom materials were provided. Less than one-fourth of Region F and G teachers indicated that they received materials.

OR Classrooms

Program documents specified a 20-1 student-to-teacher ratio. Only 6.9% of the teachers said their classes met this requirement. Most classes were considerably smaller with almost 6-10 students (see Table V-12).

Nearly all respondents taught their OR students in conventional classrooms. Seven teachers said their classes were organized into learning centers.

The questionnaire asked OR teachers to estimate the proportion of each class period devoted to individualized and group instruction. Over two-thirds of the teachers said they spent half or more of each class period on individualized instruction. Less than one-third spent less

than half of their time on individualized activities (see Table IV-13).

Coordinator Support

Nearly half the teachers reported that they and their coordinators never discussed the OR program while one quarter discussed the program with regional coordinators three or more times. Less frequent interaction between teacher and coordinator occurred for the OR than for either the RACC or counseling components.

About half the respondents perceived the coordinator as very supportive in recognizing the teacher's efforts, but over one-fourth saw the coordinator as not very supportive (see table V-14).

Continuation of OR Component

Almost all the principals said the OR component should continue next year. Nearly all want to see the program funded for additional class periods. Several mentioned the need for a full-time, off-norm OR teacher.

More than three-fourths of the OR teachers wanted to continue working in the program while seven did not.

SUMMARY

Regions received funds from the Junior High School Student Assistance Program to establish an Opportunity Room program in the schools, a program providing remedial instruction and personal guidance.

Relying on a sample of 123 students, Opportunity Room participation did not result in improved report card marks. On the average, participants performed slightly worse in spring 1986 than the previous two semesters, i.e., they had more F's, U's, absences, and lower GPAs.

Other measurements indicated positive effects of intervention. According to Opportunity Room teachers, a majority of the participants improved in the areas of self control, appropriate expressions of feelings, cooperation, personal, responsibility, and reading skills. The least gain was made in students' ability to follow directions. Teacher ratings showed that attitudes toward school and self esteem improved for about half the sample.

The report card findings showed some sharp regional differences. The number of F's and U's and the GPAs vary by region before entry into the program and on the final report cards. Apparently, regions used different criteria for selecting program participants.

The absence of consistent student improvement and the presence of regional variation in student criteria in report card data may be related to the ways in which the Opportunity Room was implemented. Among the three components of the Junior High School Student Assistance Program, the Opportunity Room appeared to receive the least attention in both written program documents and actual coordination and supervision. Some coordinators said they were not delegated responsibility for the Opportunity Room component.

Table V-1
Background Characteristics of Opportunity
Room Student Sample

Item	N	%
Sex		
Male	65	54.2
Female	55	45.8
Total	120	
Age		
12	7	5.8
13	23	19.0
14	39	32.2
15	40	33.1
16	12	9.9
Total	121	
Grade		
6th	17	13.8
7th	24	19.5
8th	47	38.2
9th	35	28.5
Total	123	
Student Currently An Opportunity Transfer		
Yes	6	5.0
No	114	95.0
Length of Participation in the Opportunity Room		
Less than one month	4	3.4
1-2 months	43	36.1
3-4 months	67	56.3
More than 4 months	5	4.2

Table V-2
Background Characteristics of the Opportunity Room
Sample by Region

Item		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	Total
Ethnicity										
Native American	N	2	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	5
	%	12.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	18.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.1
Asian	N	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
	%	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.8
Black	N	3	8	10	8	4	0	0	0	33
	%	18.8	57.1	62.5	66.7	25.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	27.0
Hispanic	N	3	6	6	4	5	4	16	14	58
	%	18.8	42.9	37.5	33.3	31.3	25.0	100	87.5	47.5
White	N	7	0	0	0	6	9	0	2	24
	%	43.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	37.5	56.3	0.0	12.5	19.7
Filipino	N	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	%	6.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.8
Total		16	14	16	12	19	13	16	16	122
Home Language ***										
English	N	16	11	11	8	14	15	0	9	84
	%	100	73.3	73.3	66.7	87.5	93.8	0.0	60.0	70.6
Spanish	N	0	4	4	4	2	1	14	6	35
	%	0.0	26.7	26.7	33.3	12.5	6.3	100	40.0	29.4
Total		16	15	15	12	16	16	14	15	119
Ability to Understand Instructions in English										
Very Well	N	4	9	6	5	2	1	1	3	31
	%	25.0	60.0	37.5	41.7	12.5	18.8	6.3	20.0	27.0
Partly	N	8	6	7	2	12	10	11	11	67
	%	50.0	40.0	43.8	16.7	75.0	62.5	68.8	68.8	54.9
Not Well	N	4	0	3	5	2	3	4	1	22
	%	25.0	0.0	18.8	41.7	12.5	18.8	25.0	6.7	18.0
Total		16	15	16	12	16	14	16	15	120

***p .001

Table V-3
Mean Number of Failing Grades of Students in the
Opportunity Room Program

Group	Semester Means			Difference of Means	N
	Spring '85	Fall '85	Spring '86		
Total Sample	1.09	- -	1.51	0.42*	112
	- -	1.38	1.51	0.31	112
Region A	0.94	- -	1.25	0.31	16
	- -	1.25	1.25	0.00	16
Region B	1.06	- -	1.73	0.67	15
	- -	1.81	1.73	0.08	15
Region C	1.07	- -	2.93	1.86***	15
	- -	1.33	2.93	1.60**	15
Region D	1.06	- -	0.75	0.31	16
	- -	1.00	0.75	0.25	16
Region E	1.33	- -	1.53	0.20	15
	- -	1.53	1.53	0.00	15
Region F	1.29	- -	1.93	0.64	14
	- -	1.62	1.93	0.31	13
Region G	0.38	- -	0.50	0.12	14
	- -	0.57	0.50	0.07	14
Region H	2.14	- -	1.43	0.71	7
	- -	2.57	1.43	1.14	7

*p .05
**p .01

Table V-4
Mean Grade Point Average of Students in the
Opportunity Room Program

Group	Semester Means			Difference of Means	N
	Spring '85	Fall '85	Spring '86		
Total Sample	1.66	- -	1.40	-0.26**	105
	- -	1.42	1.40	-0.02	106
Region A	1.71	- -	1.56	-0.15	15
	- -	1.17	1.56	0.39	15
Region B	1.91	- -	1.35	-0.56	13
	- -	1.39	1.35	-0.04	13
Region C	1.75	- -	0.70	-1.05**	15
	- -	1.20	0.70	-0.50*	15
Region D	1.76	- -	0.71	-0.05	15
	- -	1.61	0.71	0.10	15
Region E	1.63	- -	1.39	0.24	15
	- -	1.34	1.39	0.05	14
Region F	1.09	- -	1.22	0.13	14
	- -	1.17	1.22	0.05	13
Region G	2.15	- -	1.94	-0.21	11
	- -	2.30	1.94	-0.36	14
Region H	2.43	- -	1.27	-0.16	7
	- -	0.90	1.27	0.37	7

*p .05

**p .01

Table V-5

Mean Number of Unsatisfactory Work Habits Grades
of Students in the Opportunity Room Program

Group	Semester Means			Difference of Means	N
	Spring '85	Fall '85	Spring '86		
Total Sample	2.94	- -	3.35	-0.41	109
	- -	3.36	3.35	0.01	109
Region A	2.69	- -	2.81	-0.12	16
	- -	3.44	2.81	0.63	16
Region B	3.69	- -	3.77	0.08	13
	- -	3.08	3.77	0.69	13
Region C	2.67	- -	4.27	-1.60*	15
	- -	3.60	4.27	-0.67	15
Region D	2.67	- -	2.60	0.07	15
	- -	3.33	2.60	0.73	15
Region E	2.87	- -	4.27	-1.40*	15
	- -	4.00	4.27	-0.27	15
Region F	4.00	- -	3.86	0.14	14
	- -	3.85	3.86	-0.01	13
Region G	1.71	- -	1.79	-0.08	14
	- -	1.86	1.79	0.07	14
Region H	3.71	- -	3.57	0.14	7
	- -	4.00	3.57	0.43	7

*p . .05

Table V-6

Mean Number of Unsatisfactory Cooperation Grades of
Students in the Opportunity Room Program

Group	Semester Means			Difference of Means	N
	Spring '85	Fall '85	Spring '86		
Total Sample	2.09	- -	2.38	-0.29	110
	- -	2.20	2.38	-0.18	111
Region A	1.50	- -	1.31	0.19	16
	- -	2.20	1.31	0.07	16
Region B	2.36	- -	3.33	-0.97	15
	- -	1.38	3.33	-0.46	15
Region C	2.80	- -	3.80	1.00	15
	- -	2.87	3.80	-0.93	15
Region D	1.67	- -	1.63	0.04	15
	- -	1.75	1.63	0.12	16
Region E	2.13	- -	2.87	-0.74	15
	- -	2.07	2.87	-0.80	15
Region F	2.64	- -	2.57	-0.07	14
	- -	3.15	2.57	0.58	13
Region G	1.29	- -	1.50	-0.21	14
	- -	1.21	1.50	-0.29	14
Region H	2.71	- -	1.71	1.00	7
	- -	2.71	1.71	1.00	7

Table V-7
Mean Number of Absences of Students in the
Opportunity Room Program

Group	Semester Means			Difference of Means	N
	Spring '85	Fall '85	Spring '86		
Total Sample	10.00 - -	- - 10.17	12.66 - -	-2.66***	93
Region A	6.07 - -	- - 8.70	8.67 - -	-2.6	15
Region B	16.69 - -	- - 15.00	14.07 - -	-2.6	13
Region C	11.67 - -	- - 11.53	21.40 - -	-9.73**	14
Region D	8.71 - -	- - 7.81	12.25 - -	-3.54	14
Region E	5.99 - -	- - 10.78	5.92 - -	0.07	5
Region F	13.33 - -	- - 6.63	5.92 - -	3.83	11
Region G	6.00 - -	- - 8.00	12.50 - -	-6.50	12
Region H	8.71 - -	- - 5.14	7.57 - -	1.14	7

*p .05
**p .01
***p .001

Table V-8

Teachers' Perceptions of Student Improvement in the
Opportunity Room Program

Group		Degree of Improvement			Total
		Great Improvement	Some Improvement	Little or No Improvement	
<u>Group 1</u>					
Expresses Feelings Appropriately	N	114	6	0	120
	%	95.0	5.0	0.0	
<u>Group 2</u>					
Amount of Work Completed	N	7	96	0	103
	%	6.8	93.2	0.0	
Willingness to Cooperate with School Authorities	N	6	99	0	105
	%	5.7	94.3	0.0	
Takes Responsibility For Own Actions	N	15	92	0	107
	%	14.0	86.0	0.0	
Reading Skills	N	24	80	0	104
	%	23.1	76.9	0.0	
<u>Group 3</u>					
Attitude Towards School	N	26	47	49	122
	%	21.3	38.5	40.2	
Beliefs About Own Academic Ability	N	18	49	56	123
	%	14.6	39.8	45.5	
General Self-Esteem	N	15	61	46	122
	%	12.3	50.0	37.7	
Respect for Others	N	38	29	55	122
	%	31.1	23.8	45.1	
Ability to Concentrate	N	15	41	65	121
	%	12.4	33.9	53.7	
Self-Control	N	17	58	48	123
	%	13.8	47.2	39.0	
<u>Group 4</u>					
Following Directions	N	5	29	89	123
	%	4.1	23.6	72.4	

Table V-9

Principals' Assessments of Information Received
About the Opportunity Room Program

Item	N	%
Adequacy of Information About Goals of Opportunity Room		
Very Adequate	29	72.5
Somewhat Inadequate	9	22.5
Very Inadequate	2	5.0
Total	40	
Adequacy of Information About Criteria for Selection		
Very Adequate	28	68.3
Somewhat Inadequate	11	26.8
Very Inadequate	2	4.9
Total	41	
Adequacy of Information About Opportunity Room Curriculum		
Very Adequacy	25	64.1
Somewhat Inadequate	9	23.1
Very Inadequate	5	12.8
Total	39	

Table V-10
Distribution of Opportunity Room Teacher
Respondents by Region

Teacher Respondents	N	%
Region A	9	15.0
Region B	6	10.0
Region C	6	10.0
Region D	7	11.7
Region E	10	16.7
Region F	13	21.7
Region G	2	3.3
Region H	7	11.7
Total	60	

Table V-11

Opportunity Room Teachers' Perceptions of Training
Available, and Materials Received by Region**

Item	N	%
Inservice Offered		
Yes	15	28.8
No	37	71.2
Total	52	

Item		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	Total
Written Class Materials Offered										
Yes	N	8	5	5	3	4	1	0	2	28
	%	88.9	83.3	83.3	42.9	40.0	7.7	0.0	28.6	46.7
No	N	1	1	1	4	6	12	2	5	32
	%	11.1	16.7	16.7	57.1	60.0	92.3	100	17.4	53.3
Total		9	6	6	7	10	13	2	7	60

**p .01

Table V-12
Opportunity Classrooms' Size and Type

Item	N	%
Class Size		
0- 5 Students	2	3.4
6-10 Students	27	46.6
11-15 Students	22	37.9
16-20 Students	4	6.9
More than 20 Students	3	5.2
Total	58	
Type of Classroom		
Conventional Room	45	86.5
Learning Center Concept	7	13.5
Total	52	

Table V-13

Proportion of Class Time Spent on Individualized
and Group Instruction

Item	<u>Individualized Instruction</u>		<u>Group Instruction</u>	
	N	%	N	%
Proportion of Class Time				
More than 3/4	11	19.0	3	5.2
1/2 - 3/4	29	50.0	14	24.1
Less than half	15	25.9	27	46.6
No time	3	5.2	14	24.1
Total	58		58	

Table V-14
Opportunity Room Teachers' Perceptions
of Coordinator Support

Item	N	%
Frequency of Discussion with Coordinator About the Opportunity Room Program		
Never	26	46.4
1 or 2 Times	16	28.6
3 or 4 Times	9	16.1
More than 4 Times	5	8.9
Total	42	
Coordinator Supportiveness in Recognizing the Teacher's Efforts		
Very Supportive	20	47.6
Somewhat Supportive	10	23.8
Not Very Supportive	12	28.6
Total	42	

CHAPTER VI

RECOMMENDATIONS

Introducing the Program at the School Level

1. Coordinators should discuss the Junior High School Student Assistance Program with all principals as soon as possible for 1986-1987. They should offer to introduce the program to all staff, advisory bodies, and others as desired by individual schools.

Many principals expressed a desire to have coordinators introduce the program to teachers, counselors, the P.T.A., and other advisory bodies at the school level.

Program Assessment

2. Program evaluation should begin at the start of the 1986-1987 academic year. Data collection should occur throughout the year.

An evaluator was not selected until April 1986. An earlier collaborative relationship between the coordinators and the evaluator will facilitate the selection of reliable pre- and posttests, uniform administration of the tests, efficient instrument design, the timely collection of other required data, and consultation with other specialists (e.g., in testing). Data collection should occur gradually over the year.

3. Standardized and reliable pretests and posttests of both academic and affective skills should be administered uniformly throughout the district. Pretesting should be conducted as close to a student's

entry into the program as possible.

During the 1985-1986 year, some regions administered pretests and posttests of academic skills and self esteem and some did not. No two regions used the same tests. Competent evaluation requires standardization in test content, administration, and scoring.

4. Report card data should be collected in 1986-1987 for last year's Regional Assistance Center Class samples. The number of failing grades, unsatisfactory marks, and absences as well as grade point averages should be compared to previously collected data. If a student remains in the regional class for 1986-1987, report card data should be collected for two semesters after the student leaves the program.

Participants' report cards improved significantly in Spring 1986. However, some unknown proportion of that change may be an artifact of regional teachers' grading criteria. Also, no one yet knows how participants will perform after returning to their home schools. A small longitudinal study would address this issue.

5. Evaluation instruments should be designed for conventional and year-round schools.

Research instruments for 1986-1987 neglected requisite adaptation for year-round schools. (The collection of report card data and attitudinal data from off-track students are particularly in need of adjustment.)

6. The evaluation for 1986-1987 should include staff turnover/stability as a topic of inquiry.

Within a three-month period last spring, personnel changes occurred in three regional coordinator and the district coordinator positions. Three of these were due to promotion. Such personnel turnover may affect the program.

7. Next year's evaluation should include observational data in the regional classrooms.

Observational data provides requisite background knowledge for the construction of well-informed and useful measurement instruments. It also captures the process side of a program as it actually unfolds.

Regional Assistance Center Class

8. District-wide Referral, Intake, and Placement forms should be developed.

Currently, eight different sets of referral forms are used. Moreover, the amount of documentation required for referral varies widely across regions. Regional consistence has apparent advantages for comparisons of effects.

9. Regions should insure that qualified and interested teachers are able to accept the regional class teacher positions.

At least one school did not release one of its teachers to accept the regional class position.

10. Coordinators should plan and execute district-wide, periodic staff development for regional class teachers. They should resolve any

scheduling and attendance problems (with the assistance of regional administrators).

Almost half the regional class teachers said no staff development occurred. All expressed interest in workshops on highly relevant topics.

11. At least one Regional Assistance Center Class should function on a year-round basis.

Currently, regional classes operate during the conventional academic year. Student participants whose home schools are year-round ones need the program during the summer. Coordinators and some principals of year-round schools initially suggested and strongly support this recommendation.

12. When a referred student is rejected for placement in the regional class, the coordinator should carefully explain the decision to the referring school.

One-fourth of the principals said coordinator communication was very inadequate about the rejection of students referred for placement in the regional class.

The Extended Counseling Component

13. Student selection criteria for the Extended Counseling Program should be clarified and distributed throughout the district.

Original program documents specify assistance for potential dropouts and others with serious discipline, attendance, and/or academic problems. Evaluation findings indicate

that, for some regions, academic marks were higher and absences fewer than one would expect if original guidelines were used as a template. Regions seemed to use varying selection criteria. Although variations among regions may be appropriate, clarification needs to occur.

14. School personnel should insure that lack of student proficiency in English is not confused with discipline or other academic problems.

A majority of the sample receiving counseling had difficulty comprehending English which may easily be confused with other problems.

15. The definition of "auxiliary" counseling should be clarified.

Program personnel expressed concern about regular work hours overlapping auxiliary counseling hours. Paper accountability requires a clear distinction.

16. A district-wide EC counselor log should be developed or an existing one uniformly adopted. Log submission dates and procedures should be standardized.

Coordinators stated that no common counselor log form or submission dates were in use. Concern was expressed about regular work hours overlapping auxiliary counseling time.

17. A needs assessment should be conducted to determine the appropriate number of evening and weekend auxiliary counseling hours.

Regions significantly vary in their schools' scheduling of evening and weekend hours. However, coordinators discovered that some students experienced transportation problems and "idle" time when scheduled for late appointments. Informal assessments at the school level will permit the proper scheduling of counseling hours.

18. Auxiliary counseling hours should be provided twelve months per year at year-round schools.

Principal and coordinators made this recommendation.

Counseling for students in year-round schools currently terminates in June.

19. District, region, and school personnel should facilitate program counselors' attendance at scheduled staff development workshops.

Some coordinators reported that attendance and release time for attendance at inservices were problems last year.

Yet, coordinators, principals, and counselors feel staff development is an important aspect of the program.

20. Region coordinators should design cooperatively staff development workshops and the selection and dissemination of counseling materials. Part of this work should include consultation with various counseling experts (e.g., student attendance and adjustment counselors, school psychologists, community resources).

There is wide regional variation in counselor assessments of staff development for 1985-1986. Sharing knowledge and resources among coordinators may augment the value of inservices and materials in all regions.

21. The current EC program should be expanded.

Coordinators, principals and counselors want to see the current program expanded by increasing the number of auxiliary hours at each school. The hours per week were decreased for 1986-1987.

The Opportunity Room Component

22. The Opportunity Room component needs further conceptualization and structure.

The Opportunity Room component lacked specification for 1985-1986. Regions and schools used this component for varying purposes. Student outcome data showed little improvement. Principals and others say they want the Opportunity Room expanded to cover a full day.

"Other" Coordination Matters

23. The role of Regional Coordinator needs further clarification.

Five coordinators said they performed some duties for their regions which were not related to the Junior High School Student Assistance Program. One additional coordinator did not answer the question on this issue. Priorities for this position need to be established and communicated.

24. A district administrator should serve as program coordinator for the Junior High School Student Assistance Program.

The District Coordinator position was not funded for 1986-1987. Many program tasks require coordination among regions. Someone is needed to schedule meetings and staff development and to

serve as liaison with district offices. No data indicate that the program should be completely decentralized.

25. The data collected should be complete and accurate.